Ross Dowson archives – correspondence – Year 1973

01_16	Letter to Connie and Allan (Harris), England, re: two IMG (British section) members now in Toronto; RD is refused admission to Toronto branch discussion
01_24	+PC Minutes No. 4, Attachment: "Statement by Kent:" the usefulness of the category 'probationary membership'
01_25	Statement by Kent (RD) on Jan. 22 issue of *Labor Challenge* on erroneous line on postal workers strike vote
01_28	+PC Minutes No. 5, Attachment: "Statement by Kent:" the error of *LC* in not identifying with postal worker militants and *LC's* praise for the dubious settlement
01_99	Document in LSA DB 1972 Number 25, **''The Key Issue at Dispute in Canada-US Relations, Part 1,"** re: the degree and specifics of US capitalist penetration and takeover of the Canadian economy. ***See:*** ''Canadian Nationalism'' section
02_00	Document: (undated note to self, found in 1973) **"Is Canada imperialized and its State (imperialist)?"** the new LSA-LSO leadership falsely claim to base their position on Mandel's views, re: Canada's integration into US economy ***See:*** Canadian nationalism
02_06	Letter to Bob R. (Montreal) re: news of Quebec, Waffle-MISC success in Ontario
02_06B	Letter to Rich Lesnick, SWP (New York), re: obtaining copy of CBC radio biography on Leon Trotsky
02_08	Letter to comrade Leon (P?), *Taupe Rouge* (ultraleft publication, Montreal), re: request to send him back copies
02_11	Letter to Leo (E.) Hanover, re: his apparent critique of Mandel; conditions of the population of Rimouski, Quebec
02_99	Document in LSA DB 1972 Number 30, **''The chartered banks and their role in Canada-US Relations,"** re: the banks as instruments of the takeover; banks and corporate directorship crossover **See:** ''Canadian Nationalism''
03_07	Letter to Art Grey, Coldwater ON, re: Waffle-MISC and internal bulletins (of the upcoming formation of the United tendency)

03_09 Letter to Dick (P.) Vancouver, re: facilities and layout of Camp (Poundmaker); preparing contributions on Canadian nationalism for coming league convention

03_15 Letter to Nic(k S.) Vancouver, re: decision to form a tendency; the labor party slogan in Quebec

03_16 Document: **‘’Declaration by the United Tendency”** signed by 19 Toronto LSA members, declaring 1) support for the FI minority, 2) defending the 1968 LSA document ‘’Canada-US Relations,’’ 3) supporting the 1971 plenum document ‘’The NDP and the Waffle,`` (see Aug. 28, 1971); and the document ‘’Our Orientation to the NDP,`

03_16B *(Undated notes in R.D.’s handwriting):* The PC (LSA leadership faction) profoundly disturbed by the formation of the United Tendency *(based of the 1968 document “Canada-US Relations”)* for the upcoming LSA-LSO convention

03_19 Document: **Statement on our publications program, by Ross Dowson,** East Branch, re: The need to proceed with the publication of a quarterly theoretical journal; also on the March 19 issue of *Labor Challenge* in which the LSA leadership has opened a factional attack on the UT, espousing revised movement line that Canadian capitalist class is an independent imperialist class

03_20 Document in LSA DB Number 35: **‘’The Key Issue at dispute in Canada-US Relations, Part II;**’’ the junior partner role of ‘’Canadian’’ capitalism and imperialism to that of the US and the rest of the world; the strategic importance of US ownership and trade relations with Canada; ownership details of some major corporations in Canada **LINK** to ‘’Canadian Nationalism’’

03_24 Letter to Nick (S.) and John (D), re: part 2 document on Canadian economy on press for the UT; perspectives for the tendency; other documents and issues to be raised (3 topics incomplete?)

03_31 +Attachment to PC Minutes No. 10 by Kent: why I support the Santiago statement of the L-T Tendency but have not signed it

03_99 (Handwritten notes by R.D.) on “Where is the Tendency (the UT) going” based on the 1970 LSA documents on our NDP orientation and other policy documents from 1970-1971; where is the movement itself going?

04_11 +”Statement of the United Tendency (Van.)” (written by J.D.): concern over majority’s use of factional terms and behaviour of a CC member *(statements in Box56 Folder 3-NA)*

04_17 Letter to comrades Pi-Lan and Shu Tse, Paris, re: his health and lectures; the factional intervention by the FI and Mandel in the British and Canadian sections

04_17B Letter to John (D.), Vancouver, re: convention discussion underway in very factional way in the centre as UT slandered and cut out of convention representation; left NDP election campaign

04_28 Document: **RD speech to LSA convention: setting record straight on UT positions;** a critique of the leadership counter-document on Canadian nationalism; the real situation with US capitalist penetration and takeover of the Canadian economy

04_98 (Undated draft?) Document "R.D. & Hans, U.T. about April/73) : the U.T. calls on the LSA for a return to our adopted policy, Our orientation to the NDP;" the ultraleft pressures on our movement

05_10 Letter to Gord (D.) defending viability of Metro North branch in face of expected challenge by LSA leadership

05_12 Letter to Zane (B.) and Lynda (B.), re: planning his research reading at the camp

05_15 (Mothers Day, at Poundmaker), Letter to Gord (D.), re: need to keep the North branch operating; quoting Cannon on weathering quiet periods

05_21 Letter to East Toronto Branch LSA, comrades: application for a leave of absence for the summer; living at the camp

05_24 Letter to Charlie, St. Kits, re: need that Gample interview for work on the history of the movement

05_24B Letter to Nic(k S.), Vancouver, re: work on transcript of the Whitney tape; history of the early period in the movement; news of the centre and fusion of RCT and *Old Mole*

05_27 Letter to Bill Whitney, Vancouver, re: value of his taped interview; questions on the role of early members

05_30 Letter to Phil (C?), Saskatoon, re: sending tape interview transcript for correction; his comments on Birney and the unemployed struggle in Regina

05_31 Letter to Nick Oleniuk, Bisset, re: his letter from LT sent to SWP for publication; the SWP Trotsky anthology series out

06_10 **‘’Notes on the League for a Revolutionary Party** – from a taped conversation with SG and EB;’’ re: outline of some personalities and issues in the early 1930s when Spector was the principal leader; the 1933 split leading to formation of the LRWP, which was active until World War 2

06_14 Letter to Nic(k S.), Vancouver, re: the irrelevancy of our press; the defection of RCT members; continuing factionalism in the movement; leadership adapting to ultraleftist pressures

06_14B Letter to Abie W., Toronto East General Hospital, re: RD`s movement meetings in Toronto; RCT defections and direction of various comrades in the new situation

06_14C Letter to Maurice (F.), Vancouver, re: the confused situation in the centre with correspondence; his and other letters from Vancouver on the BC Women`s Ministry

06_19 Letter to Nic(k S.), Vancouver, re: efforts to line up RD in the face of RCT opposition on the PC and ultraleft pressure from the RMG press; moves to drop critical but unconditional support of NDP

06_21 Note to self, re: his being isolated from movement activities; the leadership`s sectarian policy in the abortion coalition leading to the isolation of the movement

07_03 Note to self, re: comrades wanting tendency declared again; RD speaks at St. Catharines branch; leadership sets up a central bureau; the BC Women`s Ministry debate; RMG influence on leadership`s NDP policies; a new LSA leadership cadre is posed

07_03B Letter to Lou Donnelly, Ontario, re: a survey of left wing and former NDP left forces in Ontario now; Waffle defection and ultraleft pressures make intervention in upcoming convention questionable

07_03C +Letter to Dave and Jennie: regret that your deposit on a Camp lot has not been returned; RD making partial personal refund

07_05 Letter to Joel Britton, Pathfinder Press, SWP (New York), re: misc. publication notes

07_19 Note to self, re: RD challenges John R. and Phil C. to state their revisionist views on the NDP orientation to an open debate; going off payroll since not able to function in movement; Lynda B. and Dennis L. change their positions on Canadian nationalism; the union committee discussion at the camp

07_19B Letter to Lynda B. re: last issue of *LC* off the beam on the NDP; the neglect of the camp; the developing sectarian attitude in women`s liberation work

07_30 Letter to (John) R., re: the defunct United Tendency; the leadership L-T tendency dropping the LSA 1970 NDP orientation document

07_31 Letter to Gord (D.), re: TU committee leaders talks irrelevant and their select committee cuts out activists; talks with various comrades; the Barnes SWP document ; the leadership`s ultraleft line in women`s liberation; the need for us to discuss

08_01 Letter to Dale re how to get out from under accident debt

08_09 Letter to the Political Committee: protesting the cancellation of the camp educational weekend; departure of maintenance comrades

08_14 Letter to Zane (B.), re: blowup of Jim and Lynda over camp weekend cancellation; upcoming climax in factional struggle both in the LSA and FI; our ‘’absurd’’ interventions at the NDP convention

08_14B Letter to Jim (M.), re: urged to retain LSA membership; urged to take a stake in the camp

09_06 Letter to Lou (D.), handwritten, re: replacing the camp`s new fireplace flue

09_16 Note to self, re: meeting agreement to form a tendency; existing tendency members falling out of active membership

09_17 Document: **‘’On the question of ‘Canadian unions,’”** *LC* editorial fails to note it is a tactical question, appearing to oppose them and not taking new situation into account

09_24 Letter to Cynthia (F., Vancouver), re: what are her views on the BC Women`s Ministry debate

09_27 Letter to Cynthia and Maurice (F.), Vancouver, re: fuller discussion of debate around BC Women`s Ministry question and our orientation to the NDP; a critique of our role at the convention; Hansard confirms RD`s critique of *LC* line on the rail strike

09_27B Letter to John Glenn and Zane (B.), re: correction of date of tendency meeting; need return of material borrowed by Zane

09_28 +”Memorandum on Camp Poundmaker” by RD: The camp lodge and common elements controlled by the LSA; with 9 owners a co-op is set up;

lots can only be sold by the co-op, Camp needs a formal bank account and officers, flyer with map outlining facilities

10_01 Letter to Gary O`Brien, Ottawa, re: Archives at Toronto Reference Library; other veteran socialists he should speak to and books to read; his and CBC interviews with Spector

10_04 Document (LSA/LSO IIB Vol.1 No.1), ‘’**Statement of Tendency Formation by the Labor Party Tendency;”** based on the LSA document ‘’Our Orientation to the NDP…’’ signed by 13 members

10_11 Letter to Nic(k S.) Vancouver, re: formation and activities of the LPT

10_15 Letter to Cynthia and Maurice (F.), Vancouver, re: RCT member on PC paralyzing leadership; sending them (LPT) tendency statement

10_18 Letter to Joe (Hansen, SWP), New York, re: RD’s new bookstore manager job; the reasons for, and the reaction to, the formation of the LPT (Labor Party Tendency)

10_23 Letter to Maurice (F.), Vancouver, re: LSA leaders not discussing BC Women`s Ministry openly; they misread the debate over the Rand Formula; the debate over BC labor legislation; NDP labor legislation in general; tactical conflict between comrades at the convention; atmosphere of exclusion in centre bureau

10_26 Letter to Dick (P.), re: need for a caretaker at the camp; on the BC (NDP) labor legislation; Waffle in Ontario; international events

10_97 **Document:** (undated speech or PC report, found in 1973) **“Ross Dowson NDP 1”** (altered by an unknown person) re: alleged boycott by LPT of the LSA/LSO convention (LPT also part of LSA international L-T Tendency); a defence of the historic LSA orientation to the NDP

10_98 (Undated ‘’Book Review’’ unpublished) **‘’1905`` by Leon Trotsky**

10_99 Document: (Undated bulletin excerpt “R.D. contributions:”) **RD on popular frontism;”** question not discussed by LPT; was the Allende government in Chile a popular front – I don’t think so”

11_03 Letter to Isabel Alonso, re: current IS and other tendency journals in Britain; new edition of LT`s book on Britain; a poem

11_11 Note (partial?) ‘’submitted to the PC’’ re: ‘’We work in the Arab and Jewish communities as open partisans of the Arab national cause… (exclusively in) ’’defense of the national rights of the Palestinians``

11_12 Letter to (oldest brother) Murray (Dowson) and Jeannette, Iroquois Falls, re: RD`s sister Lois helped finance his condo; RD quit his job

11_20 Letter to Joseph Starobin, Toronto, re: apology for the delay in meeting you (a veteran socialist)

12_04 Document: **‘’Statement by R. Dowson on summary of Paquette`s (Art Y.) report** of his views on the draft political resolution submitted by the IEC Majority Tendency for the coming (F.I.) World Congress;’’ RD`s abstention due to the report`s claim it favors popular fronts in many countries, and the resolution`s ambiguous appraisal of the new international vanguard

12_04B Letter to Hans (M.), Germany, re: (RD’s brother) Hugh`s union local resolution; Art`s irrational critique of the FI resolution; leadership`s sectarian opposition to the NDP; our tendency document on the orientation being completed

12_04 Letter to Cynthia and Maurice (F.), re: RD`s contribution on (BC) Women`s Ministry out but no response on any of his input; critique of gay liberation fraction; crisis in the women`s liberation fraction

1973_99 Document: (undated, found in 1973) **Bibliography: ‘’Theory of Nationalism and Canada;”** a list of titles and library numbers; **‘’Theory of Nationalism;”** a list of books under related subjects; a list of journals and books; ‘’Canada as a nation, as the (Stalinist) CPC saw it, from a British colony to an independent capitalist imperialist power;” Notes on Marxist writings on nationalism

Janaury 16, 1973

England
Dear Connie and Allan

Keith and Fay came and went wihtout my having any opportunity at all to have a talk with them. I did not even know they were in Toronto until the New Years eve social. And my dual role--talking to a few old ti ers and working the bar-took up my time for the evening. I would have very much likedto get a picture of things there---all the more that I hear that you have at last opened up a really effective bookstore. ~~Express~~ Express my regrets and given them my regards

I was speaking to Lou Donnelly the other day. It seems that we have a rather friendly relationship with a locallly promisent lawyer in Orrillia. A few weeks ago he told Lou that his nephew was coming back to Orrillia from school in Leeds University for a holiday and he thought that Lou might like to meet him as he is a Trotskyist. Well Lou met him and he tells me that he is an excellent type. It appears that he is a member of the IMG and is very sympathetic to your tendency. I would gather that he has drawn these conclusions from reading IMG internal material. Lou gave him Nottingham addresses. But I understand that Sheffield is quite a way north of Nottingham, besides he may not take initiatives. And then too Nottingham may not take the trouble to pass this information on to you.

His name and address is Barry Cohen ,26 Beech Hill Road, Sheffeld 10 62915

Perhaps Pathfinder work may take you into the area

Another Canadian--Torontonian--who is in the IMG(Oxford) dropped into the store a month or so ago. He came over with credentials from Tariq, probably to hop up our tendency. I do not know his name as I am trying to keep out of those things these days. He must have got a big laugh from the one meeting of the West Toronto branch he attended. A comrade ,a leading activist in NDP work asked me if I would drop down to that branch meeting to hear his report on the recent Ont NDP convention. So I came down just at that moment to the rear so I could hear it inobstrusively. But it appearsthat another comrade from the branch I am a member had asked formal permission to sit in on the meeting and had been refused .When I came in the chairman who happened to be in our ultra left tendency informed me that as a member of anoyher branch I would have to leave. Rather than cause confusion--all the more that John Steele and several other leading comrades were there and did not so much as make a mumur although I am chiarman of the LSA-LoC--I left. I raised this whole matter with John S and other and I understand the next week they straightened the record. But he must have got a laugh and been the source of another juicy story for the IMG rumour mill.

I had supper with Gus H and Jack B--they tell me that Pathfinder is really moving out in England now and onto the continent.

Hope this note finds you both well. England looks pretty good these days from here

warmest regards

Ross Dowson

Statement by Kent

It is not realistic to reply to the inquiry of the Metro Toronto Executive Committee that there is no such category as probationary membership and that an applicant is either recruited without reservations of any kind or not at all. If we are not to discuss the specific circumstances that cause this enquiry then we must make a general statement along the following lines:

- Bolshevism combines, contains within it, both political intransigance and organizational flexibility. This organizational flexibility serves its politics.

- Our constitution defines our organizational norms.

- But,it cannot, and no attempt should be made to shape it so that it serves all the varied eventualities that have faced us in the past -- and will confront us in the future as we go through the processes of splits, fusions, unifications on the way to building the mass revolutionary vanguard. It is because of this understanding that we have never written into it such a category as probationary membership and any other number of possible forms of organizational relationships that we have used in the past or might possibly employ in the future.

- The absence from our constitution of the category of probationary membership does not in anyway mean that our movement renounces or rejects the concept of probationary membership. It has in the past, and to good purpose, employed this concept under specific circumstances. And there is no reason why we, as dialectical materialists, would exclude the use of this tool now or in the future. To attempt to do so is an exercise in futility for as important as our constitution is -- it is subject to the will of the convention and the conventions' consciousness and ability to grasp its essence and its function as a tool of our politics.

- The status of probationary membership is an exceptional one and would have to be motivated in each specific circumstance. Since the circumstances favoring the use of this status could be varied, no purpose would be served to attempt to define it or speculate as to the circumstances and conditions favoring its use.

- Only the political committee between plenums and conventions has the power to recruit persons who have dropped out of our ranks and seek readmission. Transfers are governed by the authority of the PC. These responsibilities have not unduly burdened the PC. We therefore propose that the implementation of this status reside in the PC.

signed/Kent
January 25, 1973

Statement by Kent

The article in the January 22 Labor Challenge is in error because it fails to identify with the militants in the postal workers unions or give them any useful direction either as to how to win a better contract or advance towards forming a new class struggle leadership. When the joint bargaining committee of the postal workers rejected the conciliation board report by a clear 6 to 4 majority (LC called it a narrow vote) and the membership despite the confusion as to the meaning of their voting recorded a vote of 11,217 that could be interpreted for acceptance and 9,479 against acceptance of the report -- the press of the revolutionary socialists comes out strongly in support of the conciliation board report.

Why didn't Labor Challenge identify itself with the sizeable opposition amongst the postal workers to acceptance of the report, and why did it not become the voice of that militant opposition and advance a program of action?

Instead it gave sweeping support to the conciliation board report -- a report which recommends a mere 65 cents an hour over a period of almost three years (33 months) and almost no protection against the massive introduction of new machinery, well underway. According to the Labor Challenge article the conciliation report assured job security only to those workers now employed. (We have heard only those on permanent staff whereas there are thousands who remain temporary employees). This is praised as being an improvement over the previous situation, instead of condemned, as we have done in the past when automation was accepted under such conditions by the Harry Bridges leadership on the West Coast etc.

Instead of calling for a clear strike vote (we reported that 6,000 carriers in 30 locals called for a halt to the vote on the negotiating committee's confusing proposition -- so the taken vote is highly questionable) or some other line of action, the revolutionary press advances all the classical arguments advanced by union bureaucrats and reformist misleaders against any militant action.

Labor Challenge says the leadership is not equal to the task of defending the interests of the posties, but it doesn't identify with the workers who it claims hit the bricks demanding government action on the report (the Government has since hurriedly accepted the report) and it was not prepared for the wild-cat actions that took place across the country.

As the voice of revolutionary socialism Labor Challenge had no cause to identify itself with the terms such as the union representative on the board and a minority of the nego-

tiating committee might have felt compelled to accept. Nor had we cause to take the line of "sign now". Labor Challenge makes the record for the ranks to build a class struggle opposition to the leadership in a totally abstract way. The line of the article is such as it would win no sympathy whatsoever and in fact would only be understood as beirg opposed to the actions of the militants who sought a way out by wildcatting. It does not suggest anything that would aid in coalescing a class struggle opposition -- a cross-Canada conference of secondary leaders or anything else.

This is all the more difficult to grasp as our movement despite its general lack of connections with the unionized working class has a sizeable group of comrades in the postal unions, some of them with a really big experience in these unions. The line of our press on the postal workers struggles has to be drastically revised and in consultation, not only with the postal workers across the country but with other comrades with union experience in our various centers (Our Toronto Trade Union Fraction never met during this period) and a program of action worked out.

signed/ Kent
January 25, 1973

27 Bulwer Street
Toronto M5T 1A1
February 6, 1973

Bob R

Dear Bob;

I am sorry that I did not meet you face to face when you were last in Toronto. The comrade in the store at that time passed on the book. The book is interesting but not as much as you

I have been delayed in taking up your letter of January 20 because I only received word from Vancouver the other day. I wrote Joan Newbigging immediately. She replies that she got your direct note to Vancouver and asks me to tell you, to apologize for her--she had ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ misplaced your note.

It appears that none of the comrades happen to know Lyle's address. But I gather he drops around ocassionally -so she has put everyone on notice that next time he drops in they should get his address. They may also be able to pick it up from persons who know him. She assumes that you keep in contact with the Montreal bookstore so she will send it to you there as soon as she gets it.

Big events these days down your way; the jailings of the Big Three, the penetratio of Social Credit into the Montreal area and now its identification with Quebec nationalism under its new leadership---I would suppose this will throw Levesque towards the left a bit--at least cause him to take the halter off the left . Things have quieted a bit here with the Vietnam settlement and the international detente, the elections of NDP governments and the continued Toronto boom. But as you know -there are lots of cross currents. The Waffle group that left the NDP is having incredibly large attendance at its political economy courses---the first and second were attended by well over 350 peróple at $1.50 a shot. Well over two hundred put 10 on the line for the 12 evenings. As you know Waffle-MISC did not instruct everyone to leave the NDP although it pulled outitself. Well the great majority at these classes appear to be NDPers--so we have the situation where the left wing influenced by the main Waffle current pulled the NDP left wing to the side of the party. They claim to have 600 signed up members and with the class are signing up 100 á month. I would gather they are preparing their conference for April-May sometime.

Hope this note finds you in good health and spirit--and the good life is not widening your girth too much. I had a physical the first time since I left the army almost AI but I pedal a captive bicycle for about 10 to 5 minutes every morning-- I have a music wrack handy so I read the ISR at the same time. You should try it.

comradely

Ross Dowson

Febraury 6, 1973
Toronto M5T 1A1
27 Bulwer Street

SWP
Rich Lesnick

I only received your letter dated Jan 26 the other day.
I gave you
You are using the address xxxxxxxxxx-I have checked it out and cannot understand why your letter bounced. In someway it is just as good though as I dont think your letter is what we want. I gather you are under the impression that Unger is a comrade or friend of ours. He is a CBC offacial. I do not know if he knows me or if he does whether that is good or bad for this purpose. The letter has a too personal tome when it should be all business--and it should be written as comi g from Joe himself who as a participant in the program has a right to a copy of the tape.

I have looked over my note to Joe and I see I am responsible for having given a wrong impression.

I think the letter should be drafted along the following lines; Walter Unger, care of CBC, dear sir, with regards to your Tuesday nite program Leon Tsvtsky,- a biography., as you possibly know I was interviewd for this program as a secretary of Trotsky; although I did not hear the program I understand that it was a considerable success, as a non-paid contributot and longtime archivist of matters relating to Trotsky, his life and ideas I would appreciate a copy of the tape, would you kindly send it to my address 411 East 10th Street Apt 19H New york NY 10009 sincerely etc.
I think that we should keep the SWP out of it--it is a personal service that we think the CBC would respond to. Of course Joe doesn't have to get involved in it you could write the letter and sign his name. If you think that sending it to Joe's home might lead to inconvenience write from Joe's address and ask them to to do the favor of sending it to Joe H care of ICP or something like that.

I am quite sure that the address is good. Perhaps it just needs CBC after Unger's name--perhaps it is a big office building and the name did not ring a bell. With this note off in the mail is another to our Winnipeg comrades asking them to check the address. If there is any problem with itthewill let you know at once

comradely

Ross Dowsn

Ross Dowson
27 Bulver Street
Toronto M5T 1A1
Feb 8, 1973

La tapue rouge (Portland? Montreal

Dear comrade Leon;

A couple of months ago shortly after I received a sample copy of your first issue i put a one dollar bill in an envelope along with my name and address --and asked for a subscription.

Last night I spent a social evening with Murray Smkith and Dick Sash and Murray gave me an extra copy he had of issue number 3-4. So I see that you are coming off the press.

Would you check out my subscription and send me a copy of issue number 2

If you have no record of hgving received my subscription send me a bill and I will send another $1

You will pardon my English. Interestingly I have found out my trouble with the French language. Even I have become aware of increasing difficulty in my hearing. The audio specialist I went to told me right away that I would have the gravest difficulty understanding another language than English as I suffer from a boilermakers ear and have for some decade. I do not hear consonants.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

Feb 11.1973

Dear Leo Erlich - Hanover

I have typed up the copies of your article with a short introduction which should serve to intorduce it to the ISR. The address of the lsr is

International Socialist Review
14 Charles Lane
New York N.Y. 10014
USA

I am suprised at the modesty of your position. In my opinion --the decline is both absolute and relative--I do not agree with your "revision"

Incidently Trotsky upholds this very clearly and explicitly in his valueable essay entitled Marxism in the United States which was an introvudtion to a book The Living Thoughts of Karl Marx--~~xxxxx~~ a prsentation of Volume One of Capital prepared by Otto Rhule. It is rather long or I would quote it to you. He makes it his first defence of Marxism--and takes on Sombart in detail.

Just as Mandel does not deal with the question in its totality neither do you. Recently there was an interating item in the Globe and Mail dealing with Canada--Quebec to be precise

> Rimouski Quebec---More than 30% of the population in eastern Quebec depends on provincial government assitance to survive, says a report prepared ~~by~~ the Eastern Quebec Development Office. This percentage--about 106,000 persons--does not include people receiving old age pensionsm says the report. The report says that 30.3 million in Quebec government social welfare benefits were paid to 34,889 eastern Quebec recipients in 1971. These recipients had 71, 249 dependents. Canada Manpower statistics show that at the end of March of this year 26,698 pers ons in the area were out of work, co pared with 16,387 in December 1971, the report says.
>
> Star November 24, 1973

Not to mention at all the millions of the colonial masses whose economies of subsistence have been wripped apart and face famine on upprsedented scales-living on Canadian wheat handouts etc.

Before you send it off to the ISR you should check the Marx quotes--you have a different edition of Capital than I have so I was unable to do this.

comradely

Ross

March 7, 1973
27 Bulwer Street
M5T 1A1
Toronto

Art Gray
R R # 4
Coldwater, Ont.

Dear Art;

I happened to be browsing through Lichtman's Newsstand the other day and noticed a copy of the enclosed paper.

I am wondering if you have seen it before. A peculiar little paper. Do you happen to know Fred Ross of Barrie or Bruce Bonnell of Minesing ? I am sanding it along just in case you have never seen it.

Have you come across the Waffle paper--Waffle-MISC. First one came out in February. I have loaned Dennis the only copy I have come across. It shows that the impressive response that they have received in Toronto at their forum series is by no means an isolated phenomena. I am starting on a contribution to our bulletin on the Waffle MISC experience and Canadian nationalism.

I hope the bulletins have not overwhelmed you. How did you like Wayne's Roberts contribution on Canadian nationalism. My Part II is in and by now should be on the top of the to-be-typed-on-stencil heap. It deals with Canadian imperialism and with the scope of US domination of the economy as a whole--its integration with that of the US Got three to go yet.

comradely

Ross

March 9, 1973
27 Bulwer Street
Toronto M5T 1A1

Vancouver

Princep

Dear Dick;

Yes, I am sorry not to have answered your enquiries about Poundmaker sooner.

It is not at this time, in some fields, up to your expectations--but it could be quickly brought up to them.

We have a fully equipped kitchen in the main lodge. There is a pump just outisde the door piped into the kitchen. But there is no heating as we have never had anyone stay over at a time of the year when it would be needed. Oh, yes I spent about 5 days out there late fall when it was quite cool at nite. I set up my bed in the kitchen which we had insulated and used the oven with its thermostat to heat up the one room. There are only three rooms in the lodge, The main room takes up practically the whole thing --one side completely windows looking out over the valley with a ceiling that peeks to about 20 feet high. Jim set up a small sleeping room last year for the person who stays in the lodge in the summer. Everyone else sleeps in tents or open air or in one of about 6 very nice small sleeping cabins we built last summer. We could winterize part of the lodge or possibly it might be more practical to winterize and set up for living one of the larger sleeping cabins--some of them are a fair size. We could work that out.

There is good train service from Napanee

The camp is about three miles from 401 and about 5 miles from the lower old Toronto-Kingston-Montreal highway--and the town of Deseronto. The bus that would stop and pick you up to go to Kingston or Toronto goes through Deseronto The through buses wont stop on 401. We have a couple of bikes up at the camp that would cut the time down. Napanee ,which is a fair sized town with everything — meaning a Canada Tire shop and a big food market and a couple of bars etc etc is about 10 miles from the camp. We have a couple of refrators in the lodge kitchen— one without a control on it that we use as a deepfreezer, however we intend to get a freezer for the camp because with the weekend gang we need to have a considerable amount of food available. Jim knows all the bulk food places in the community.

I dont know about the welfare problem out this way. Hane has been on welfare while he has been ill and they check in on his living place. But I suppose we could set things up with someone here in the city so that it looks like you are living here. I would n't think that you could get welfare in the township of Tyendinaga where the camp is.

The camp will probably take another leap forward this summer. Jim Mitchell has been instrumental in making big progress. Vic Hugh has now got his A frame cabin in good shape so there are two very nice cabins up. It is probable that George B will put one up on his lot this year. I intend to spend more time up there this summer. In fact I am toying with the idea of living out there this summer commencing not long after the convention at the end of April. Lois' cabin is well outfitted and she is agreeable.

Incidentally I have not received anything from you such as you mention in your notes.

No I am not writing memoirs. But I plan to pull together what there is of party files and at least prepare the material for a history of the early period of the

Have you read the -Just but by Vol 1

movement---see if I can round out Rodney's book Soldiers of the International and then move onto the Trotskyist [redacted]development. I havent even started yet--that is what I would plan to do in the camp

The local press treatment of the BC NDP is somewhat mixed--the latest handling of their moves against the land speculators is being presented as the real socialist thing. What do the NDP militants think of Lewis' maneverings in the house of commons these days

There are lots of thi:gs to talk about but right now I am up to my neck in preparing contributions for the comnig convention---trying among other things to come to grips with this penomena of Canadian nationalism which is a powerful facotr in the radicalization down here in the East. The Waffle-Misc seminar here on Canadian political economy has attracted an incredible response. Over 275 persons signed up for all ten lectures and paid the money inadvance and 350 to 400 are going to the classes. Misc has just put out a very modest tabloid and [redacted] according to it the Toronto successes are not by any means isolated ones. And who do you think is moving around them--speaking at various projects---Stanley Ryerson. Probably you were aware that the CP announced about two years ago that he was no longer associated with them. MISC claimed a couple of months ago to have 600 members and to be signing up persons at the rate of over 100 a month. It would seem logical that they will launch their operation at the climax of their classes. According to some comrades who have been moving around the classes it would appear that the broad left support they had at the conventions of the NDP is stillwith them---that the NDP left while staying in the party tends not to be oriented so that the Left Caucus could pick them up but [redacted] somewhat on the outside, oriented to the outside ,to MISC. They appear to be preparing a big intervention on the Mackenzie pipeline.

comradely

Ross

March 15, 1973

Vancouver

Dear Nic;

I am wondering if you got the letter I sent you a while back.

At anyrate here is another for you to poner over. The comrades have decided that we should form a tendency. I am enclosing a copy of our statement and it would be excellent, if you agree, that you sign it. I am sending you this copy off just as soon as the signers all tell Dennis of their agreement--tomorrow I will take a copy down to the central office so that it can be circulated in the normal channels.

Dennis and I have been tossing the ides back and forth for sometime now. The situa ation was continuing to deteriorate here, a cerain polarization was taking place and we now along with some other comrades feel that it is best that we form the tendency. In Toronto hear there is the RCT as you know. There is also a group of ten comrades which includes Pat Mitchell whom you know, Bob Mcfarthy, Peter Hobatiuk, Wayne Roberts Ellie Kirzner. They have been meeting over the past period moving more and more in the direction of a tendency even a faction but without clear positions. Wayne wrote up not a bad contribution on Cdn nationalism you have no doubt read. Some of them have the same view as the RCT on the NDP--they are for a full blown Trotskyist rrrrevol- utionary left caucus in the NDP--all in all a mixed group, a number of them tith a long record of being side stirics of the leadership and the movement, dilletante's . In reality there are pretty much a personal frends clique. We understand now that they are forming a tendency . We are hoping that our forming a tendency will blow their effort to do so up. Some of them vote consistantly in my branch with the RCT.

Yes, the deterioration is considerable. The youth is in very bad shape, Toronto almost inoperative. Peterborough more and more under RCT and ultra left pressures , going its own way .Hamilt n is in a bad way.

I doubt if you read Liberation. Last Monday during my stint in the store I read a big double spread on our intervention in the PQ convention. Friday in passing during an evening discussion I had with Phil he mentioned that there was a dispute between Alain and Colleen on the PQ but he said he did not know what it involved. Well the article in Liberation signed by Alain carries my line--the line I developed at the plenum. You will recall I said that the labor party demand was quite unreal and that we had to cunterpose small as we are the LSO to the PQ. Well that is exactly what Alain's article does. It is addressed to the left in the PQ which are stupidly says doesn't exist telling them to break from the PQ to socialism --to the LSO An add on the same page counterposes the LSO to the PQ---not a word about the labor party. It might be good for you to bri g this to Joan's attnetion and have a talk with her. I am going to bring it up at the PC--it might even put some life into that tailor-made operation

At anyrate we all think that the tnedency will help to focus the discussion. We put the educational part on nationalism as our position on this has been badly mutil ated. You will recognize that we have employed the old man's theory of combined and uneven development to explian nationalism in Canada.

Inciden ly did the press out there report Dennis McDermott Cdn director UAW painful self criticism as heccalls it on the question of Cdn autonomy and nationalism---"unless international unions in Canada can make some failry drastic accomodations and adjustments to the needs of Canadian nationalism" he said their very existence is in jeopardy.

I hope that you agree with the statement and will put your name to it. Let me know your opinion right away--hear any comments you have. Time is very short. Hard to say where things are going. We will probably have a meeting of all comrades in Toronto who agree within five or six days, It would be good if you could have a letter in here by then.

comradely

Ross

Declaration by the United tendency

March 16, 1973

The following are initiating a tendency in the League for Socialist Action/La Ligue Socialiste Ouvriére for the purpose of more effectively presenting our views on questions which we consider to be central in the pre-convention and convention discussion.

We share a common concern about the lack of clarity, and even confusion in the discussion so far, and about the highly factional atmosphere that has developed. We hope the formation of the United Tendency will help lead to a more calm, more orderly and useful discussion so that the problems confronting Canadian Trotskyism can be solved.

1) We support the minority tendency in the Fourth International and its platform of three planks to be advanced at the next world congress

a) Reversa1of the turn made at the 9th World Congress on guerrilla warfare and its extension since then, both geographically and programmatically.

b) Reaffirmation of the use of the method indicated in the transitional program to solve the concrete problems faced by the Fourth International and its sections in bidding for leadership of the proletariat in the class struggle.

c) Reaffirmation of the basic program, tradition and practice of the Fourth International as they stood up to the time of the 9th World Congress, that is, specifically of commitment to the Leninist strategy of building a combat party to assure success in the coming revolutionary upsurges of the proletariat and its allies.

We stand on the document Canada-U.S. Relations — a socialist viewpoint, adopted by our 1968 convention which enabled us to meet the challenge of an anti-U.S. imperialist sentiment developing in an anti-Canadian capitalist direction, that

was then becoming widespread. This completely validated position permitted us to correctly relate to its extension into a nationalism in English-speaking Canada which, although finding contradictory expressions, is a key element in the unfolding radicalization. We are for the identification of our movement with this nationalism and our intervention with our Trotskyist program of democratic and transitional demands.

The essence of this nationalism can be summed up, for the purpose of this declaration, as follows:

Because of the historic delay of the Canadian-U.S. socialist revolution which will lead to the realization of a Socialist United States of the North American continent, a process of integration or absorption of the economy of Canada with that of the mightiest imperialist power in the world is taking place under capitalism. This has resulted in the widespread and growing development in English Canada over the past several years of a nationalism – a phenomenon which is traditionally part of an earlier bourgeois stage of development.

Due to the distorted and weak development of Canadian capitalist society, the Canadian bourgeoisie and their state acquiesce to this process of integration and by so doing violate these growing national aspirations. Arising as they do at a time of increasing capitalist crisis in Canada and across the world, and at a time of widening radicalization, these national aspirations lead toward conflict with the Canadian state, and toward a linking with the tasks of the Canadian and international socialist revo1ution.

3) We stand on the theory and practice of our movement with regards to the NDP expressed in the document "Our Orientation to the NDP: the Strategy and its Tactical Application;" the document "The NDP and the Waffle," adopted by the 1971 plenum, and our practice with regards to the NDP and the Waffle up until the summer of 1972.

Ross Dowson, Toronto East
G.T., Toronto East
R.M., Toronto East
H.M., Toronto East

J.M., Toronto East
William B., Toronto East

Dennis L., Toronto West

Lynda B., Toronto West
Nick S., Vancouver
John D., Vancouver

Charles L., St. Catherines
Harry P., Toronto North
Harry Kopyto, Toronto North
S.K.. Toronto North
Gordon D., Toronto North
R.D., Toronto North
Jim C., Toronto North
Dale R. Toronto North

Abie Weisfeld, Toronto North

(Later additions) Vic Hugh, Toronto; Wayne P. St. Catharines

Secretary: Dennis L., 550 Jarvis Street, Apt. 918, Toronto M4Y 1N6 Phone: 961-3502

(Undated note_ to self in RD`s handwriting, found in 1973, re: the United Tendency formed for the LSA-LSO convention)

With the formation gathering in the direction of forming a tendency – the PC faction was profoundly disturbed.

While I presented the concept that there were varied ideas as to what the problem is and what is to be done, Dick (F.) attempted, challenged me with failing to answer many questions and challenged me to answer them now – I told the meeting that I was not going to be provoked.

John (R) was extremely agitated – the whole question of transfer of leadership and the breakdown in relationships raised.

Of course this came at the same time as I formally went off the payroll *(Sept. 1, 1973—ed.)* they see that it is almost a certainty that a tendency will be formed – and I would suppose with my going off the payroll that it is certain to develop as a faction.

Dick warned that I am involved with a clique – challenged that Gus was with us, that Zane was. I told them that Dennis not invited – Lynda (was but did not attend.) They do not accept the concept of (a) varied profile for a tendency – that it could be quite low – particularly until the RCT *(the ultraleft Revolutionary Communist Tendency)* leaves us.

All kinds of legalistic arguments in reply to my motivation of the meeting, that the UT *(United Tendency)* was the basis of it and yet I did not admit to Canadian nationalism being the matter of most concern – but in fact that it was the NDP. Regaled me with not having raised these matters in the PC, though only a few minutes before they decided on the PC factional setup for the explicit reason that the PC has been non-functional – largely because of the presence of Walter *(of the RCT –ed.)* on it.

Claire phoned this morning – she assumes that I am looking for a temporary job – that I will be moving back in and taking over – the problem is largely an organization one in her opinion and solutions (are) clear. I told her that she was mistaken and I thought it was all to be decided what was going to be done by those meetings. I told her I thought that it was good that she brought out the question of the willingness of the persons assembled to take on full-time responsibilities.

John R. smiled when I told the comrades that he had only recently said that he found a part of the 1970 document difficult to grasp – when I said that is how we started off on the 1968 Canada-US Relations (fuzzy formulations, unclear, etc.) demolition project.

***

Gary (P.?) concerned about attendance. Phil (C.) raised idea of their attending the meeting

***

At this coming meeting we will have to open with a frank exchange. I no doubt shook them all up as did Claire – that I was prepared to go alone – Pat`s (S) dismissal of them all. Neither Pat nor Jim being essentially petty-bourgeois understood or grasp my comment that the movement was degenerating into a sect – did they understand that we are dumping our strategic orientation to the labor party? Why don`t they grasp that – Pat S. of course never understood our view it seems to me on Canadian nationalism. But Hans (M.) in particular grasped this immediately – he saw the majority line as alienating us (and rendering us sterile) from the radicalization.

Interesting comments by GA at the PC meeting during discussion on Chile. George (A?) admitted that some of our picket signs (Chile ’73 Spain ’36) were designed to shock people which of course they did – and also expressed hope that RMG would play into our hands by making a series of real errors.

(ends)

STATEMENT ON OUR PUBLICATIONS PROGRAM
By Ross Dowson, Toronto Local, East Branch.

Note: the following statement was submitted to the January, 1973 Plenum of the Central Committee, for attachment to the Plenum minutes.

The report on the theoretical journal presented by comrade Cappe to our fall plenum as published in Internal Bulletin #12 read; "We must hold off the launching of a theoretical journal at least until substantial moves towards the weekly and bi-weekly have been accomplished."

1. Following the plenum it was agree, since this has become a part of the pre-convention discussion to be resolved by the convention, that no moves would be made to disperse the funds raised for the journal. That would be an organizational act that would settle a political question for some time to come. The matter of the journal therefore remains open for discussion, and then decision at the convention.

2. Comrade Boyd of East Toronto branch made a submission on the press appearing in Bulletin #21.

I support that submission and in particular its stress on th need to proceed with publication of a theoretical journal. Such a journal, addressed to the tasks of the Canadian and world revolution, is necessary to raise the theoretical level of our own forces. It would go a long way to establish the League as promoters and developers of Marxist theory, and thus enhance our influence.

I agree with his contention that a journal places little real demand on the movement in relation to its value. The projection is an issue every three months, composed of three or four articles. The cost per issue would be no more than one issue of our press, and circulation over a three month period would be well within the capacity of our movement. I do not see how a decision on this matter is tied into the matter of our ability, either now or in the future, to go weekly or bi-weekly with our press.

Further postponement of the journal, since we have already become committed and have been given the funds for the purpose, would signify a big step backward in the political development and influence on the movement, and would in someway constitute a breach of responsibility to the movement as a whole which overwhelmingly and enthusiastically responded to our appeal at Waterloo.

I would propose that the convention refer this matter to the leadership that will be elected by this convention, for its immediate action.

With the March 19/13 issue of Labor Challenge, our public press has been ~~marshalled~~ used by the political committee majority to carry their positions (daily a pre-convention discussion) against those of the United Tendency in the crudest, most detailed and most arrogant way, through the League, its sympathizers and what public we have. The most flamboyant is the article published across the center spread in the name of the editor--although there are other (including the provocative article entitled "Brascan; cross section of Canada's ruling class."

What could (possibly justify this conduct at this time-only one month before our pan-Cana dian convention--this violation of the line adopted at our 1968 convention which clearly stated that "the relationship of the Candian capitalist class vis-a-vis the US capitalist class can best be described as that of partner--junior partner."

Do s the matter involve something of the gravest and alarming implication to our work like the kidnapping by the El Combatiente forces of Sallustro? Something of such (an order and) urgency, receiving wide publicity in the mass media involving Trotskyism and (the) principles of our movement, that requires immedaite political clarity of the LSA/LSO's position ? By no mean

The major article suddenly injected by the editorial board --who are a majority of tha Polit cal Committee, which has not met for ~~a~~ (de Board) a longstanding matter upon which we have written before and upon which we will no doubt have many more ocassions to comment on---the question of energy resources located in Canada and the Candian and US capitalist classes (ruthless) exploitation of them against the interests of the Candian working class ,the United States working class, and the workers of the world.

The essential premise of the article ,somewhat confused with erudition but coming through loud and clear--is that the Cana dian capitalist class are a powerful independent capitalist class in domination c

all the key sectors of the Canadian economy in full control of its financial institutions (particularly the chartered banks) firmly established in its fortress state, and one of the major colonial imperialist powers in the world. It even characterizes the US as a "rival" imperialism. It has the Canadian capitalist class firmly standing up to the US bourgeoisie in defence of the energy resouse inside the Canadain borders, when most shhool boys know that in the exploitation of the work force and natural resources in Canada is carried out with the Can dian bourgeoisie, at best functioning as junior partners of the US bourgeoisie

It is ironical to read the comments of Allan T Lambert as the voice of Canda's top business men who control the Canadian state apparatus "not on the verge of surrendini (as DF puts it) to some colonial status," Allan T Lambert, chairman of the board and chief exeuctive officer of the Toronto Dominion Bank.

Of all the chartered banks, not counting the Morgan controlled Mercantile Bank, Toronto-Dominion is the most obviously US controlled bank in Canada. Mr Lambert, presented as the spokesman of Can dian private capital, holds directorates on some of the biggest US corporations and/or their Candian subsidiaries- Westinghouse (Canada) Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting, IBM(Canad Union Carbide(Canada) the Union Carbide Croporation of America itself, International Nickel etc etc.

Isn't it obvious when the Canadian state protects industry and finance in Canada with the approval of W.O. Twaits, chairman of Imperial Oil(Standard Oil) that it is protecting US interests which own almost 60% , not to mention what percentage they control, of all manufacturing in Canada, including 99.7% of Canda's petroleum and coal products--certainly two of the major energy resourses.

Searching for the reason for the appearance at this time of this incredibly factional article in our public press, we can only surmise that it is impelled by the response to the "energy crisis" of the Ca n dian nationalists, which the PC majority have condemend root and branch

as bourgeois and reactionary and against whom Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism would have us wage "a presitent and relentless" cappaign in the working class and left wing movements", their now expounding views that clearly open up tremendous opportunites for us to take forward and popularize basic socialist ideas on a broad arena.

Eric Keirans-kicked out of the federal Liberal cabinet and now holding a seat at McGill university and taking jobs as economic advisor to the NDP provincial governments-who last federal election publicly stated that he he was voting NDP, is presenting an argument "strictly national ist, not anti-capitalist .As a matter of fact it is pro-capitalist designed to increase the competitive position of Canadian businessmen-including Kierans. Kierans advice to his fellow capitalists..."

You wouldn't know that Kierans has recently beenattacked as presenting a report to the NDP Manitoba government labelled by the president of the Manitoba Minining Association and vice - president of Sherritt Gordon Mines as "a Communist document, foreign to any Canadian thinking on the mininig industry"

However over the whole past period we have come to expect nothing and if not even less, from our press in this area. Who would know that the Canadian director of the UAW, and international vice-president, Dennis McDermott has submitted a report to the Canadian membership cautioninig international uions against dismissing "the fervent nationalistic attitudes that pervade this country" and that it is his belief that "unless international unions in Canada can make some fairly drastic accomodations and adjustments to the needs of the current emotions that exist in this country, then the role of international unions is in serious jeopardy. Indeed" he warned,"their very survival as an effective en tity is questionable."

McDermott has apparently drafted a list of proposals designed to give the UAW , one of the least bureaucratized and internatoal -office controlled, even more structural autonomy.

Is it because Eric Kierans, hardly a socialist, as Labor Challe notes, has urged in his report that the Manitoba government should within the next ten years take over the Manitoba mining industry in Manitoba, in cluding International Nickle's Thompson Lake operation, under public ownership/

It is ironical to read following the observation that Waffle MISC has urged public ownership of resources industry, following up with the observation on Kierans, that these "demands must be posed by socialists along class lines, not nationalist." As if in this specific situation, that hasn't been the entire trend. It is obvious that nationalists, even such bourgeois nationalists as Eric Kierans are tending to express themselves in terms that open up towards socialsism---that it is increasingly easier for us to link up the transitional with socialist tasks, not only public owership of the resources industry but under other industries and under workers control.

Is the editorial board attempting to provoke the United Tendency and its supporters into counter actions that might further compromise a comradely exchange of opinion and the resolution of this important debate on nationalism in English speaking Canada before our comnig convention ? We hope not, accurate We will not be provoked.

But we propose that this political committee meeting censure the editorial board for this flagrant violation of democratci centralism on the eve of our convention.

March 24, 1973

Dear Nick and John (D) (Vancouver)

It was certainly good to hear from you via wire.

We are not putting on a big drive --but of course we want to widen the tendency and xxxx failry quickly. Without much a do it now has 20 supporters. ~~[illegible]~~ The movement here is in bad shape and it hasn't yet been able to get the statement we drew up off into the mails to the various branches---

The bulletin--part 2 of my economic contribution---I sent you a copy Nick-came off Wednesday morning--the statement was to be included in that. Well it hasn't yet been gathered and mailed and it is now Saturday nite. So comrades we are not already in touch with know nothing abou the tendency. The statement has been read in all three Toronto branches --sent one to Charlie Lee and Gord Doctorw went off to Kitchener today to discuss xxxxxxx with a c uple of key comrades he knows there. The PC agenda was so jammed today that after raising about 5 atters I did not have time to make our propositions about xxrxmarrangements being made to hold meetngs in various palceswhere we would be able to send a comrade to speak on our view. I will be taking this up and arranging it tommorrow.

We are strongest in the Toronto East and Toronto North branches--Charlie Lee and Wayne Pine in St Kitts have signed--there is only one other comrade there, Dave Dorey, and I gather he will sign. Generally speaking it is the older comrades and the working class comrades who are now with us. There is one block of comrades whose direction is not yet clear to us About three months ago in Toronto-in Toronto East and Toronto West about 10 comrades got together. Generally they xxxxm have been caught up in the organizational question--on the political questions they have widely varied views. Our fear was that they were going toeards the Revolutionary Communist Tendency but when we lauched the United Tendency we frustrated that. To a large degree it was a personal association affair too. It is now breaking up. A coupèe have gone over to the RCT but the others have rejected that option without deciding their next step--it is possible that a couple will drop out , some may float free as they say, and we have possibility of picking up a couple , Possibly we will pick up Wayne who wrote on nationalism. Unfortunately he sees nationalism in English Canada so contradictory as he cannot come to grips with its essence. Of course here in the East the RCT is the big issue----in the braod spectrum of which they are a part--~~xxxxxxxxx~~(they are operating quite openly as a parallel party to the LSA)--we stand with the PC majority . We wan ed to make that clear at once by ident ifying ourselves with the International minority on Latin America. SOomrades are first having to make their decision as to whetehr they belong to the LSA or to the RCT which is not functioning as a tendency but as a parallel party. So the differentiation between ourselves and the PC majority is going to xxxxx be a bit of a process.

abbrtion

When Isolde was here for the coalition she made a point of coming over to see me and we had a lengthy talk about the situation. She was searching for information--I thought honestly. I am wondering how she is reacting. She lead me to believe that Wendy S was sympathetic or possibly would be sympathetic to the tendency

We had our first tendency meeting on Wednesday. Most of the comrades were there. Jim Mit chell who only made up his mind the day before told me that it was the best meeting that he had attended in the two years since he returned to the League. Waterloo was 2 years ago wasn't it. Zne Boyd gave a synopsis of the theory of uneven and then combined devel- opment and applied it to the ri e of this new Canadian nationalism. Point 2 is a short of tight summary of this approach. We struck off a continuing committee which met on Friday night to go over some of the ideas that the comrades have and report them back to tommorrow's meeting. I am working on a very short-tight synopsis of our views on Canadian nationalism which we will present as a counter line document. I am presenting a draft to the committee tommorrow a few hours before the meeting. There will be a rounded discu sioon and we will will make any

changes , send a copy to you for your ideas and then at the next meeting h pefully be in a position to adopt it. We will keep it down to four or five pages.

Yes, before I forget. Of course we will want to go into branches where we havent met a response. If we are able to scrape up the dought we would go into branches were we have some support which would like some help. We of course havent heard from Edmonton--as they havent heard from us. How is the situation with you there in Vancouver. Do you think it would be advantageous if one of us came out there on a tour ? Let us know right away. And what about Edmonton. For instance if you think you have the feel of things and are able-maybe you should go into Edmonton. Let us know. We have already worked out in our own mind how to handle Montreal, Ottawa, Orillia, Kitchener---- You should let us know how t ings are there as soon as possible. What response you got from your meeting call...and what you think the future possibilities are there

This letter is somewhat choppy --Sandy D insisted on coming up to have a talk about her experience in wormen's work. . Then Dale and Abbie W our tendency dropped in

We have notyet made up our mind on how to handle the political resolution. I was hoping that we might be able to ammend it. The change of the whole front part on the detente seems to me to be for the better--the first version was a somewhat tortuous brining us up to date from 1968. It seems to e to be generally in line with a criticism I made as a PC meeting. But they have also made som other changes and of some scope since the plenum. Harry K went through it and marked them out--on the NDP and Quebec The feeling of several comrades is that it is not useful for us to try to ammend it. Hans M thinks we should put forward the first version of the Political resolution that came out last summer but which was one of the many they withdrew. We will discuss this next meeting in on the resolution with a cou ter-document

There is some pressure on us to move into Women's Liberation. Tomorrow Toronto is having an assembly where the PC majority, Pat Schulz, Dorothy (RCT)and Lydna will make presentations. My feeling is (however we are going to have to make a decision--)that while the present document has many faults...Essentially it has the fault of Mandel's New Rise of the World Revolution which his supporters claim marked a new turn whic the minority tendency never made--the trouble was when we voted for it we did not know it contained what they now tell us was its essence. The chief characteri of this womens liberation documement is its aside from the leaderships incessant revisions of it, is itsopeness to many interpretations. It is proving mo e and more useless as a guide to our work--which after all its supposed to be its main purpose. We will be deciding how to come to grips with this next week.

The general feeling , the feeling of most United Tendency comrades, is that we are not out to widen differences and that we should stick to the three major questions. Hans is now working with Harry K on an NDP document.

I am enclosing a Xerox copy of a contribution that I put into the bulletin hopper a couple of weeks ago . We are going to try to send such material out--advance copies. My part II contribut on was in the bulleting hopper on March 1st and it is still here unmoved on March 24---absurd.

We are going to send out rudimatnary minutes or reports of the tendency meetings here. Of course we would very much like to have any ideas you have. Incidently John are you reading Liberation. The last issue contained an article on the PQ by Alain which is eactly along the lines that I criticized the Quebec resolutions line on the PQ for. This article has been translated in the ICP Nick. Read it over. ..and you will see that it more or less meets the demands that I made at the plenum--that we have to counterpose--not the labor party but the LSO to the PQ. Their ammendments to the PR raise the Quebec question too. John you migh tell me what you t ink of the preamble to the Quebec resolut on. Nick can probably tell you my criticism of it at the plenum. Incidnelty what opinion is Gagnon devel ping on the national question in Quebec--I see from the latest Cdn Dimension he identi fies with English Canadian nationalism.

(end ?)

ATTACHMENT TO POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES No. 10

STATEMENT BY KENT

March 31, 1973

While I support the Santiago statement of the international Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency I have not put my name to it.

The reason is as follows:

Shortly before the Santiago conference and the formulation of its appeal to all Trotskyists, the United Tendency of the LSA/LSO was formed in Canada. I am a supporter of the United Tendency.

This tendency endorsed the previous appeal issued over the names of some of the leading comrades behind the new Santiago appeal, making it point one in its declaration. Point two of the United Tendency's declaration expresses a position on nationalism in Canada. This position is now a matter of debate in the Canadian section's pre-convention discussion.

The Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency might feel it necessary or desirable to take a position on point two of the United Tendency's platform. However if it did want to do so, it is not practically possible because the discussion is still unfolding in the Canadian movement and the documentation would not be available for the widely spread Leninist-Trotskyist supporters for some considerable time.

In order not to put this strain on the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency and not divert it from its major task I have decided not to append my name to its appeal.

s/Kent

(Undated note to self, R.D.`s handwriting, found in 1973)

On Where is the Tendency Going *(the newly formed United Tendency – ed.)*

There is considerable tension in the tendency. It is no secret that for many comrades in the tendency the issue around which the tendency is formed – the subversion of our NDP orientation is not the sole issue at dispute in the LSA/LSO. For some of the tendency it is only another part of the record that has been built up over the past couple of years since we commenced on a thought to carry out a transfer of leadership. This is a record of subversion of a whole series of positions upon which our movement has stood. Particularly does it involve Canada-US Relations adopted by our 1968 Convention which had oriented us to respond to the anti-US imperialist sentiment but which the leadership instead of developing to an understanding of the new nationalism has rejected as having been a completely wrong position. But it also involves our Quebec positions – the nature of the TU (trade union) bureaucracy, Quebec as a colony and the tasks of the Quebec revolution – cold independence vs. permanent revolution – our women`s liberation – centrality of (choice on) abortion, (for a) mass action perspective –

One of the problems is that while the Central Office leadership and a Toronto core have pulled all this together and among themselves quite openly talk about the movement now for the first time having clear and incisive political positions, they have not openly and publicly drawn a balance sheet of the previous (immediate) past of the movement and what was wrong with it – why it had to start if not from scratch, almost from scratch.

In fact it is this process of subversion – piecemeal subversion of the positions of the movement which increases the tensions in the movement and in turn in the tendency – and which poses the question above all **where the movement itself is going.**

Everything is up (for revision) – norms of Bolshevism, nature of the League, nature of membership – poses challenge to tendency in some minds.

(end)

Vancouver minutes · John D. author-letter attached

Statement of the United Tendency (Vancouver Branch) made at the Wed. April 11, 1973 meeting.

The United Tendency feels obliged to express its concern regarding usage of certain factional terms for the first time in the Vancouver branch pre-Convention discussion. In the course of the Sunday April 8 meeting, which was a continuation of the discussion on the issue of Canada-US relations and the evaluation of Canadian nationalism today, and at which a PC comrade visiting the branch made a 30-minute contribution on behalf of the PC position, a significant shift in the tone of the discussion occurred. The comrade, Phil C-, in criticizing the UT position, made references to "capitulation to the pressures of bourgeois society", and to illustrate his point on what he referred to as the UT's "impressionism", he made an analogy with the Burnham-Schatchman debate, a debate which took place within the SWP prior to World War II.

(This debate saw the leadership of the SWP challanged on the basis of "bureaucratic conservatism" but the real issue was around ~~them~~ Burnham-Schactman's abandoning the position of defence of the Soviet Union in the coming war. Since this faction split with the SWP, the debate has served to educate the entire Trotskyist movement, around the central issue of the struggle, a defence of dialectical materialism, as put forth in Trotsky's "In Defence of Marxism" and James P. Cannon's "Struggle for a Proletarian Party". The conclusions drawn was that this faction, which was largely of petty-bourgeois composition, had succumbed to the pressures of the Ameriaan bourgeoisie's reactionary campaign to enter the war.)

In our opinion, the reference to this debate within the SWP in 1940 could only divert the attention of comrades from the issues under debate around Canadian nationalism and to suggest improperly the direction and conclusions of comrades of the UT.

During comrade Phil's summary, he made use of the term "pseudo-Marxists" as a thinly veiled reference to comrades of the UT, in describing elements outside the movement who defend Canadian nationalism as it is manifested today and who wish to make a serious analysis of it.

These comments have been taped, as have all other contributions in this discussion.

We would like to make the following 2 points:

1) Although it is unusual that a central office comrade should intervene not only as a participant but in leading off the debate anew on a question already under way within a branch pre-convention discussion, we have raised no objection. We asked for, and obtained, equal time for a reply, which was also our second presentation. We expected that the central office comrade would present an account of where the discussion had arrived in the centre, with an appreciation of the most recent thinking of both majority and minority comrades on the question of Canadian nationalism. However, Comrade Phil, while he brought some new material into the debate, did so in the factional manner described above. In the opinion of the United Tendency this constitutes improper conduct from a leading comrade and sets a bad example to the Vancouver branch.

2) We want to state categorically that we of the UT will not respond in like manner. We will not be provoked or encouraged to

Jerry Leung

April 17, 1973
Ross Dowson
27 Bulwer Street
Toronto M5T 1A1
Ontario, Canada

Paris

Dear comrades Pi-Lan and Shu Tse

I have just received your letter and it is so long since I have had any contact with you that I am instantly replying,despite the increasing pressure of our convention.

I have gone through your message, polished up a little (but your English is really very good) and turned it over to the convention arrangments committee. The developments with the comrades in Hongkong are truly inspiring. I am so happy for us all,but particularly happy for both of you . I hope that all your lectures are written up so that the comrades in Hongkong can print them and they can find their way into China

Of course I had heard about this development before your letter. Good news like this travels very quickly. Our Toronto friend Jerry came down to see me a few weeks ago to tell mevall about it. I see he is translating The Third International After Lenin. He is having a little difficulty with the translation but I told him that I am most anxious to help him in any way at all. I was suprised to hear that it has not been previously translated....and such an important, crucial work--it is an honor to help in anyway so that it will be available to the Chinese revolutionists.

Yes, the latest letter is even worse than the Domingo letter of a few years back. Then too there is Mandel's intervention in the British section. Is that his concept of international leadership! And of course his factional attack on the Canadian section is truly astonishing. It comes at a very bad time for us as we are going into our convention and we are trying to deal with new problems. I am wondering if you are getting our convention bulletins--and if have been abl, to sort out of that great pile of material --it must be around 50 different bulletins by now--the most important one. I think that Number 43 is quite important.

The postponment of the World Congress is an astonishing turn of events that now permits me to hope that I will be going over to see you not too far from now.
I gather that both of you are in tolerable health--that you Pi-Lan have been able to grapple with your bronchial difficulties. Well we are through winter here. Today it is a beautiful day in Toronto --the sun is out and its is very mild.

with the warmest comradely regards

Ross Dowson

April 17, 1973

Vancouver
John D
196 East 20th Ave
Vancouver

Dear John

I was hoping that Dennis would take up your correspondence. But as it has turned out that proposition in real life means passing the buck. Everyone here is very busy and of course Dennis has a job all day.

Lynda brought over your letter of April 12 last night. We all agree completely with your comments in the last parpagrph. The discussion has only begun--unfortunately it has begun in a very bad way. Vote wise at this convention ? Well I have never seen so much time and energy devoted to lining up every single comrade. It has been as if it were a life and death question. Much harder against the United tendency than against the RCT. It has been going on a longtime on the PC level but over the past ~~mmmmmm~~ two months it has moved onto every level and resorted to the lowest factional level imaginable. No comrade has been allowed to remain in the undecided level. While the discussion on the brane and public level is quite low it hard to belive how low it is in the bar and private rooms.

I suppose you noticed how in the majority tendecny declaration they have us in po point two supporters ~~xxx~~ of imperialist nationalism--"Reaffirmation of the Trotskyist position of opposition to the nationalism of imerpaillst, oppressor nations." A comrade who has not been in the discussion because of night work and has not read the documents told Gord D that he is supporting the PC majority because they s id we are nationalists and he is an internationalist. It is not new as you will see from a couple of wisecracks in my contribution to the Quebec resolution discussion that is now in a bulletin--almost a year ago Manon asked me if it were true that I am for the liquidation-I suppose entry of the LSO into the PQ--and then John Steele expressing gratification that I think that there is a trade union bureaucracy in Quebec. But ~~this~~ ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ this type of thing has gone right through the movement now. Maurice Flood came up last nite to tell me about the postal workers strike and I was suprised to hear that Vancouver comrades know that I wrote up the first article on the postal settlement when everyone should know that on reading the first article in LC it was I through a memorandum attacking that article got the complete reversal of line and then had to protest that it was scandalous that we made the 180 turn without even recognizing it conceding it to our readers who the issue before we had so badly mislead.

From your protest about the April 11 meeting I can only gather that the discussi ion there has overall been even fraternal...and not at all like here.

As best we have been able we have been trying to carry an educational campaign and been trying to stear off from being provoked. Last nite in the Toronto West branch we saw the fruit of the ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ majority's campaign--we did not get a delegate It was terribly embarassing to everyone but ourselves. The RCT got up and protested against the rules --that while we got four votes--all leading comrades Hugh D, Dennis Lynda and Wayne Roberts who has developed politically at an express train rate over the last few months--we got no delegate. Everyone conceded the status of these comrades. Majority comrades got up and mumbed in embarassment about ~~xxx~~ thats how the chips fall. The RCT wanted to rewite the ~~xxxxx~~ voting rules. But of course we accepted it. A few days previously they had ruled the Ellie Kirzner who reported that for personal reasons she could not attend could not place a proxy vote. Another comr ade, the only abstention got up and said that she would not have abstained so that we had a delegate. The had already conceded Lydna 40 minutes to present her counter line of Women's Liberation and here she is without delegate crednetials. I dont know what

they are going to do about that.

tonight the East branch of which I am a member, will vote and also the north branch where Gordo Doctrow is organizer. It is possible that Pat Mitchell will not be a delegate although they have also granted time as an opponent line u der Women's Liberation to her.

Yes the discussion has just begun. We will see at the convention however whether they have not set up such a wind that a motion to carryin on the disucssion on a literary plane will carry. There are three major contributions that I wanted to get out before the convenion---imperialism---the state--and nationalism-the Marxist theory. But unfortunately the last month has been such a hurly burly that I was not able to get down to even do the serious reading.necessary for them.

you

I am glad ~~xx~~ thought the couter line A New Stage in Ca ada US Relations was a good contribution. In my opinion this is even premature but of course the convention is here and we have to take a stand--even though we are really taking a stand in proc ess. Theory in Gray-But Life is Green caused a real crisis. It is really humilitating to find comrades attacking the title and its originator Goethe. It was interpreted by some new comrades in my branch to mean that we think that theory is a lot of crap. Vern O it appears in the East branch got up and reported that he had checked out on Goethe and found him to be an idealist.--imagine--a quote that was a faovrite of Trotsky--completely and of the essence-materialist and dialectical

I think that the contributions overall atbthe assemblies here in Toronto have been very good and educational--even thought ~~the~~ at this time they appear to have born no fruit. Gordon D on Sunday took on the RCT and their line on the NDP. It really shook all the comrades---This whole half of his contribution on behalf of the tendency was our point one-solidarity with the Lenin Trotsky international tendency. The next morning a got talking to our lone Brandon comrade-PK Nambir. He told me that while supporti /g the RCT he was most impressed--and he dismissed John Riddell as nothing but ~~xxxxxxx~~ demagogue--which alas is true. Zane's contribution the previous week o n the political resolution was also excellent. I was going to send you Xerox copies but the copies we managed to get run off got circualted around to comrades to shappen thefr arguments . Our new stage counter-resolution has not even started to be Fr translated.

Yes the movement with the majority line is in for a very bleak and increasingly diff: cult period ahead as regards the Canadian section. However life is at work--we will have to see at what rate. Did you seee and hear David Lewis and his TV debate with George Ball. Ken Sutherland dropped into the store yesterday and told me that he was really suprised how far left Lewis went--calling the multi nationals imperialist and demandinf nationalization of any plants they go to close down or phrase out and giving nothing to chauvinism. Yesterday we got a copy of the Waffle MISC paper nuber 2. It is obviously a most serious and effective operation right across the key Ontario area. How is the league to meet this big challenge. That is the question. The leader ship has been a tightly closed clique operation for over a year now--the whole movement has been terribly turned inwards. With the world congress now postponed at least until Christmas what is going to be the role of the RCT. Eveeyone has been expecting following the August projected World Congress that they would walk out, and along with Mill i. Montreal-the Red Circle and the Old Mole we would have a very challenging opposi tion to us. What are they going to do now--what effect will it have on the League.

But I have a meeting I must get to. Looking forward to meeting Nick and Ren and Bob.

with warmest revolutionary greetings.

Ross

Ross Dowson: ‘’Speech to the LSA convention, April 28, 1973’’ (Toronto)
(From typed and handwritten texts)

Comrades:

It is with some trepidation that I approach the platform of this convention of our League for Socialist Action – La Ligue Socialist Ouvrière, Canadian section of the Fourth International.

Comrade Mandel, with, I assume, the support of the comrades of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency has thrown what was a contribution to the discussion in our world movement, right into this convention, for us to vote on. He has labeled me a supporter of bourgeois nationalism. Naturally he doesn't quote anything that I have written. He refers to a draft of a political resolution with which I had little to do with and thereby labels the entire leadership of our movement, whatever the real nature of our error, to have been supporters of bourgeois nationalism.

Unfortunately our **own** discussion, with our **own** section so far, at this stage within our own ranks, has not been free of such factional excesses. A leading comrade on a cross-Canada tour likened the United Tendency to the Burnham-Schatchman tendency in the 1940 SWP dispute as introducers of alien, class pressures into the ranks of the nucleus of the proletarian vanguard.

As most of you know, I have never been one for byzantine politics within our movement – I have usually said what I thought was necessary to be said in the best way serving the movement as I have seen it. That type of analogy does nothing at all to clarify the issues of the debate before us. But that comrade's contribution was a verbal one and it is possible, just possible, that we have misunderstood it.

However it is quite another matter when it comes to an official declaration – the declaration of the majority tendency – a statement presumably well thought out, that was circulated through our movement with the alarm heading ‘’The Canadian section of the Fourth International Now Stands at the Crossroads.’’

This call to action, for rapid countermeasures, of course ‘’for the purpose of achieving political clarity,’’ enumerates a two-plank platform.

Point two calls for ‘’Reaffirmation of the Trotskyist position of opposition to the nationalism OF imperialist oppressor nations.’’ Thus the majority comrades not only underwrite Comrade Mandel's factional attack on our section but go even further.

The signers of the majority tendency declaration pose themselves as being in opposition to the nationalism OF imperialist oppressor nations. Good. But against whom? Why the United Tendency no less, who according to the collective wisdom of the majority tendency are partisans, we must suppose, of the nationalism OF imperialist oppressor nations.’’ Do we all get the full picture; it's magnitude!

There is a tendency in the Canadian Trotskyist movement composed of a considerable number of experienced comrades from across the country who can get *(a number of)* delegates to our convention who it is suggested – support the Canadian government's intervention in Vietnam (!) the exploitation of the Blacks in the West Indies, or perhaps the Québécois, who sing O Canada and raise the Maple Leaf every morning. Rumour has it that I personally thought that our comrades on the Amchitka demonstration in Vancouver should have sung O Canada, we stand on guard, with the clenched fist and with Red Beaver sweat shirts … who knows?

I anticipate that the Majority Tendency will make an official statement of repudiation of this statement which not only concerns a group of Canadian Trotskyists who may be wrong of course on this political question, and of concern to our whole movement; that such elements can be a factor in the ranks of Canadian Trotskyism.

What are the real issues in this debate? What is this convention being asked to do!

I gather from this same majority tendency statement that we are being asked to vote for the resolution ''Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism,'' not every sentence but the main line. But what is the main line of this document?

In my opinion, its central thesis which underpins whatever else it says, is that: ''The Canadian capitalist class is a powerful independent capitalist class in domination of the key sectors of the Canadian economy, in full control of its financial institutions (particularly the banks), firmly established in it's 'fortress state' as one of the major colonialist imperialist powers in the world.''

(Scratched out: Whatever you may think the relevance of the material on the Canadian economy that I have presented in three documents is to the question of the new nationalism that the United Tendency is talking about, (in) Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism – the document of the Riddell leadership –ed.) it's central thesis, it seems clear to me has been demolished.

The Canadian capitalist class is not a powerful independent capitalist class; it is not in domination of the key sectors of the Canadian economy; it is not in full control of its financial institutions including the banks, and its state cannot be said to be a "fortress state" unless you mean it is under siege; and it is not one of the major colonial imperialist powers in the world.

I think it is now widely understood in our movement that the document Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism (which comrades now in the United Tendency since its first appearance have asked be withdrawn) is wrong on al the above counts.

I think it is generally conceded that this document cannot go out in the name of the movement and that this convention cannot vote for its adoption. How else are we to understand that the majority tendency declares that support of its main line requires us to

look at another document – that its main line is in another document – two pages of a contribution by Comrade John Riddell in Bulletin No. 39.

What is the ‘’conclusion,’’ the final point of Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism? What does it tell the League to do now?

It calls for action – clearly and incisively ‘’Before the revolutionary vanguard lies educational tasks of major proportions. A persistent and relentless campaign of educational propaganda must be carried to resist and turn back the influence of Canadian nationalism in the working class and left-wing movement.’’ It calls upon the LSA to wage a relentless war against this nationalism which, without any explanation, it recognizes permeates the entire left, which, it says, has embraced nationalism with light-minded irresponsibility.

The United Tendency on the other hand in the final paragraph of its counter-resolution calls for, I quote: “identification with this nationalism – (not to achieve one-ness with it, as we have been informed the Oxford dictionary defines the word.) We are for working within this nationalism which permeates the entire left. While we will oppose any and all adaptations to backward expressions, we will project our Marxist analysis and present our Trotskyist program of democratic and transitional demands in a way which will link to the essentially anti-capitalist dynamic of this new nationalism. In so doing we will not become nationalists or some breed of national communists; on the contrary we will be acting as Trotskyists – as internationalists – which we are to the core.’’

Elsewhere after I had personally protested to comrade Riddell as to his misinterpretation of the meaning of the word ‘identify,’ in Bulletin No. 39 he continues to say ‘’in plain English this means supporting and promoting it’’ (and) that the United Tendency holds to the view that the Canadian people, both worker and bosses have common problems and common tasks.’’

(In) the short time at my disposal I will make some comments on pages 7 and 9 of what the key issues are – where the Majority tendency says we will find the main line of the resolution Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism.

Point one of the four points which comrade Riddell tells us are the core of their line of C & the C of WI is disarmingly simple; what does it amount to: a) the Canadian ruling class is an imperialist bourgeoisie with highly monopolized holdings concentrated in Canada – yes; b) this ruling class is in control of the Canadian state, a highly centralized efficient mechanism for the defence of its class interests and c) the Canadian bourgeoisie has its own national interests distinct from those of the US and other bourgeoisies and utilizes the Canadian state as an instrument to defend them. Its material interests include defending the interests of Canadian capitalism against its imperialist competitors.

The trouble with these simple statements is that while they contain some truth, they beg the question.

The first problem is that the discussion instead of getting on the rails actually has got derailed with the introduction of C and the C of WI, above all because this document ignores and violates the Canadian reality.

There have been big changes taking place in the Canadian economy in the last decade and they are not just the knowledge of statisticians and stock clerks.

In the space of 8 years US investment in Canada has increased two-fold – so that 70% of Canadian imports and exports are with the US. Through takeovers, amalgamations and corporate fusions, US capitalism owns 60% of all manufacturing assets. In addition the banks and financial institutions while possibly even majority owned by Canadian corporate wealth are controlled by US corporate interests.

The Canadian capitalist class and its state has facilitated the domination of US capital over the Canadian economy. The Canadian capitalists are junior partners with US corporate power both on the world political arena (where they are very junior) and within the borders of the Canadian nation state itself.

What has this got to do with anything of concern to Canadian revolutionists – to Trotskyist internationalists? It has had a big impact on the thinking of the Canadian masses.

It has been a matter of surprise to me that none of the contributions in our discussion have shown any interest in this. Isn`t the thinking of the Canadian masses of concern to us? Not of course to shape or determine our program but move out with our program to choose the tool in the toolbox and think how to employ it.

In a magazine International Review, February issue, there has appeared an article by two Windsor, Ontario economists that with the aid of computers pulls together 4 consecutive yearly polls on the reaction of a broad sampling of opinion on the rise of US corporate investment in Canada – 1969-1972.

More and more Canadian people think it is a bad thing. The reasons: (1) 35% Canadians should control their own business/economy; (2) 29% Profits/money leaves the country, doesn`t benefit Canada, (3) 12.4% We should be more independent.

(This) accounted for 76%; 35% didn`t say how they thought Canadians should control their own economy; 29% didn`t say that they were against Canadian bosses getting the profit; 12.4% didn`t say how Canada could be more independent.

But isn`t that an opening for us to present our solutions! This phenomena has been widely designated as nationalist. The Waffle – that answered Canada could only be independent if it went socialist – called itself nationalist, although they explicitly rejected in their Manifesto: “an independence movement based on substituting Canadian

capitalists for American capitalists'' – which would be the essence of Canadian nationalism in this respect.

Some comrades suggested that we should retain the concept of anti-US imperialist sentiment. A small movement of revolutionists cannot determine the label on a phenomenon -- ! They have to look under the label – to examine its forms of expression.

Does this mean developing nationalist consciousness poses class tasks, projects class solutions. We say yes!

Comrade Riddell in his latest contribution points out that it is the struggle that arises out of national consciousness, and points to page 6 where we note that the fact that no anti-imperialist movement has come out of it is one of the chief virtues of this new nationalism.

Of course, of course – when we talk of an anti-imperialist movement we mean movements that direct their fire against the main enemy somewhere else (at the US for instance) rather than against the enemy at home – the Canadian capitalist class.

I think that it is well worth our noting that this national consciousness has not taken a pro-Canadian capitalist direction. If it went that way we would not only not orient to it – we would have to fight against it hammer and tong.

But perhaps it is only an accident to be rectified by time that this consciousness has not gone pro-capitalist. We think not. This new nationalism isn`t at all an ideological expression of the interests of the Canadian capitalist class, of private property and the state. The Canadian capitalist class are integrationists; they see their future as a class tied to that of the US capitalist class.

The Canadian bourgeoisie are completely integrationist from the point of view of serving their own interests. They oppose nationalism. That is demonstrated day in and day out. Senator Lamontagne, former cabinet minister and economist, is a case in point – (see) his blueprint for national survival. What does it entail – a package deal with the US that would create a new special relationship.

He spelled it out: ''We should be prepared to sustain long-term economic viability by sharing some of our resources under reasonable conditions but the US should expect to do the same for us. It should provide special access to its markets for our manufactured products and leave us free to proceed with our special major industrial conversion approach. This is a matter of survival for us.''

Nationalism has been put aside by the Canadian bourgeoisie – because they are integrationist and they're seeing no way out for themselves as a class except linked with the US. Their ability to use nationalism is increasingly lessened. Against what force – against who would the Canadian bourgeoisie attempt to employ nationalism of a

chauvinist character – against the US bourgeoisie, when they are on course to integration?

The PC majority sees this new nationalism as a product of a chauvinist Canadian bourgeoisie – we disagree. The categories that the PC majority applies to Canada, that nationalism in Canada is reactionary because Canada is an oppressor imperialist state – assumes that the new Canadian nationalism is their chauvinist nationalism, that it is of the classical bourgeois type – and not of an anti-imperialist consciousness.

Our economic and social analysis proves that this new nationalism is born of an anti-US imperialist consciousness. The categories that the (Riddell) leadership applies are not wrong in themselves – they just have nothing to do with Canada itself – the economic peculiarities, (and) advanced integration. They have been talking of the nationalism of the nation, in the case of Canada an advanced capitalist economy – the nationalism of the bourgeoisie. We have been talking about a nationalist consciousness that is developing (amidst) the radicalization, and that is an extension of the anti-US imperialist sentiment that was the basis of our 1968 Canada-US Relations document.

Canada is neither a colony nor a semi-colony. But this does not make this nationalism any less progressive – because this nationalism is progressive, because of its source. It is a reaction against US imperialism which through the process of penetration has created a unique situation in Canada (with) the integration of an advanced capitalist imperialist economy with the most powerful imperialist nation in the world.

The economic situation makes the Canadian bourgeoisie act like a bourgeoisie of a neo-colony – in a weak and enfeebled way as regards to the Canadian nation. This causes the workers in Canada to express their indignation in a nationalist framework. This new national consciousness is keyed into the radicalization. As the PC majority recognizes – the entire left is nationalist; the left has embraced nationalism with light-minded irresponsibility. Of course it is clear from all they say in Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism that they mean that it has adopted nationalism -- as an ideology – or nationalism of the classic bourgeois type.

If that were so, if they have adopted concepts of common nationalist identity with the bourgeoisie you would have to say that the left – that the radicalization in this country – has suffered a colossal blow. This has not been said by anyone – and if said, proof would have to be given.

(Note) June 19, 1972 Labor Challenge

What anti-Americanism is in Canada?

There is an Anti-American element that exists in Canada but it is less than the anti-American element that exists in the US itself. Anti-Americanism in Canada as in the US is really an attack on our social system of which America is the most visible example.

If such a development took place it would unchallengeably put the stamp of bourgeois reaction on this new nationalism – that in reality there is nothing at all new about it – or at best, old wine in a new bottle.

The US takeover, the accelerating process of integration of Canada – the imperialization of the Canadian economy and Canadian society – the increasing distortion of the Canadian economy, has resulted in a form of national consciousness. This, instead of uniting other classes in Canadian society particularly the workers with the Canadian bourgeoisie, has resulted in quite the opposite – for the very reason that the Canadian bourgeoisie and their state fails to represent what this consciousness identifies with.

May 12, 1973
Ppundmaker

Boyd
Dear Zane and Lynda -B?-D?

Harry Paine will be in shrtly to work on the fire place with the parts he is bringing in with him, so I have finished up the list for reading, ~~xxxx~~ he can take ~~xxxx~~ it with him for the mail in Toronto

I hope that we can get this underway .. Claire can play a big role in telling us what is in Socialisme Quebecois---I think this is the current name of what used to be known as Socialisme 68--69 etc. She would probably be pleased to write precis of key articles. Lynda said something about Regula getting involved--it would be good if Hans ~~did~~ too. Everyone ~~My~~ impression is that Diane knows little of what is going on in MISC and Peter less. It would be good if we could crack their inside discussion circle which must involve Ryerson. Is Wayne the person to do this because of campus connections ? Probably Hans is too well known.

I have had a few visitors recently. Cherlie Lee and Greg--a new St Kits comrades-- Jim and Lynda a few days previously. It appears that Stu Sinclair had a lengthy talk with Jim on how he and various currents in the RCT see things with the League. We didn't have an opportunity to really get into it. I had a bit of a talk with Charlie last nite---they will be back tonite. He is very much concerned about the influence of MISC and our inability to come to grips with it

I have got settled in here and am now starting to see the four or so major projects before me---Brian's essays which I must pick up and clear away--then a lengthy item on the Labor party concept and the revolutionary vanguard party to underpin our 1970 NDP orientation document--then the history of the Canadian section up to WW II--then the Canadian state contribution.

But before really digging into them I have decided to ~~xxxxx~~ read through Mandel's Marxist Economic Theory which up until now I have only r read parts of. I figure that it will supply me with a good overview and refresher as I launch off into the pile of other mateirals spread across the tables up here on the loft overlooking the Salmon River valley.

Yes, Lynda the countryside counterside is very beautiful—carpets of trilums dog tooth violets. I cycled into Napannee against a strong wind and hardly made the trip back I was so tired. It has been cold and damp and it will be good when the fireplace is operatable.

comradely

Ross

D from D
Do 196 East 20th Ave
Van

Rudé was on TV 9 o'clock this morning on the Crowd in the Revolution - quite good — University on the air — Rudé is at Sir George this year

Mothers Day 1973 (May) (5th approx)
Poundmaker

Dear Gord;

Harry P dropped up yesterday to fix the fireplace wwhich we did in very short order--then he decided to stay overnight. Charlie and and her new St Kitts comrade are also here. Harry gave me your notes on the metro north branch problems.

It would seem apparent from John S and Gary's comments that they are thinking in terms of closing up the North operation. How else can you understand theixx weighty character they give to the N Merto problems--and on the other hand the roseate picture they give of the West and East Metro Toronto operations. Then again of course they could be putting the heat on you to stay on as organizer. It seems strange that they give no weight at all to Albert and Joan staying on there and yet emphasize the need for a really big influx of forces---6 or 7, like Hamilton etc. were there comrades working

I do not see that the problems in N Metro are at all as big as everyone practically, indluding yourself I think ,sees them.

I do not see that the leadership has been weak. It is good to have a high standard, an objective but just where has the N Metro leadership been so weak. Both Zane from his East Br and Lynda from her West Br experience can tell you a thing or two about weak leaderships--yes even with full timers in charge and longstanding traditional areas of work in operation carrying things forward of themselves

My impression is that both you and Bea are strong leaders, Roz is obviously a leader. Harry now that his schooling is over will once again demonstrate his leadership abilities. I think that N Metro has more than its share of leadership types. Yes, I am prepared to concede that leaders dont of themselves constitute a leadership team. But this is a problem on every level of our movement--not just N Metro. The ebb and flow of comrades' participation in the operations have more apparent effect on a small operation like N Metro than they do in say the West Toronto operation which has at least twice, if not more, persons on its bocks

there are those strong leaders Bea + Dale through ed into Metro peration

I am not able to analyze the weaknesses of the North operation, I am not fam lizr enough with the past period of work. Overall it is an impressive operation and in many many ways it has been more healthy than either of the two downtown operations. Perhaps Bea and You ,both very much otward oriented and very active (very necessary qualities for revolutionist have not spent enough time and energy in keeping in touch with comrades - following their work--like Myer in the post office --a comrade who has demomstrated in the past that he is a real mass leader and suddenly found himself completely outside of a whole big development. Of course you were involved in the pre-convention dispute--but the same thing happen in the case of Duhig. Insofar as he moved at all it came out of my questioning him during a paper mailing---neither John S or Gary were on top and he was outside of the whole thing as was Myer.

Good

Yes, my overall impression is that N Metro is a healthy operation--or has all the makings of a very healthy one. at least as good if not more, makings than the other Toronto operations

So the headquarets isn't used nite and day--dont think that Toronto's is, with two branches-both twice as large as N Metro--or Los Angeles or Minneapolis etc etc .So some comrades are not so active---dont think that is unsual. So the executive is not so political--dont think that Denver's is more so.

I think that we have all the makings of a first rate dynamic operation that can really grow. It would be good if some able comrade were transfered up from the center--Harry appears strong for a woman comrade who could move into WL while Roz plays a bigger role in the NDP. It would be good but not necessary. Some appear to be thinking in terms of someone to act as organize It would be good if someone with already that ability were sent in --but I dont think it is necessary. If you Gord dont feel up to it from both a political point of view and personally for the next while why cant ~~xxxx~~ a lesser experienced comrade take it on under your close guidance? I dont know what this talk about sending six or seven into the North is about--it would appear to be a ploy to sink the operation.There is more than adeq ate excellent material to build a really powerful N Metro operation.

N Metro is essentaily healthy. We need to think in terms of working with what we have...of building a real team operation. Of doing patient contact work--of holding classes--of perparing some really relevant internal educationals--and of course finding areas and places that we can move into . The worst thing is that we have a poor paper--however we have all kinds of excellent pamphlet material--and we know how to speak.

Cannon once stopped me at an SWP convention to stress how important it was to acquaint the various sections of the movement with the various, no matter how small, progresses that this or that branch realized. He told me that often where he was operating nothing at all was taking place--that the operation was strictly a holding one,waiting for the break. People would ask him what was happening. And he often was unable to say that anything of importance at all, where they were standing, was taking place tha was good for the party and the revolution. But he would quickly stear off that and talk about what was happening in some other part of the movement,

It would be good if we had a better headquarters--perhaps Harry's ideas on this might be realized--but what we have is very substnatial and qualitatively better than what we have in Hamilton, St Kits and many other places--it is better than the whole movement had in 1950.

some of the bigger challenges before the whole movement in the Toronto area such as Vietnam and WL conferences have turned a smaller operation such as N Metro away from the tasks that are more immediately those of a smaller group operation. I think that in the next period that N Metro should start to move in on its own fields--Richmond Hill and York campus, in its womens work in the area and in the NDP in the area --that means starting to really work in a closer and fraternal way with t forces and facilities we now have

bolster intra tions and

I dont think that we should feed into any idea that there is anythin substantially wrong in N Metro--all the more that it would appear that thi opinion is tending to be utilized to justify liquidating the whole operation. N Metro can move forward better with a modest supplementary aid from the center but it can move forward very well with the resources that it now possesses--particularly if we start to analyze them and start to much more consciously use them to the full.

I hope these few comments are useful.

Ross

May 21, 1973
Camp Poundmaker

To the Est Toronto Branch LSA/LSO
Dear Comrades;

With the expiration of my lease and the opportunity to live rent free at Camp Pounmaker I left the city hurriedly and without thinking to ask the branch for a leave of absence from direct Branch work over the summer months.

For sometime I have been intending to write a history of our movement. On behalf of the movement somewhile back I accepted the obligation to do sc serious work on the student radicalization--and the deadline is fast approc ing. When I told the central office of these projections, they agreed as to their priority and that I take the files to the camp to work on them there. I hope also to do some useful work on the concept of the labor party and the revolutionary socialist vanguard party, along with other projects.

I regret not being able to be with you during the branch's recent intervention in the teachers struggle---I saw the excellent publicity that we received when I was in town for the political committee meeting on Saturday--and now the preparations for the NDP convention.

However I anticipate that the work that I am doing will prove of use to our movement and that you will overlook my neglect and accept with favor my absence from branch meetings for the next feww months--possibly into September.

with Trotskyisy greetings

Ross Dowson

May 24, 1973
334 Queen Street W
oronto

St Kits

Dear Charlie

I have just spent the day taking off a tape an interview that Ric Shugalo in Vancouver had with an old timer of the movement. Some interesting things.

All of which reminds me of the great importance of the interview that you are to have with Gample. With our coming experiences with other forces that consider themselves to be Trotskyist this earlier experiences takeson increasing importance.

If you will get over to him right away with a tape recorder--and get the thing underway ----within the next week it would be extremely helpful.. Gample is the only person that we can count on to give a worthwhile picture of this experience which was taking place just as I was coming into the movement and more innocent than I even am now.

Clear the deck and let's go

comradely

Ross

add note → not sent for smo season

May 24, 1973
334 Queen Street West
Toronto

Vanccuver

Dear Nic

I received your tape in good order.some days back. I think that Jim brought it out with him with the first batch of mail I received out here at the camp.

Well,today I took it off the tape. After that I went through it and typed up the notes from it as attached. So it is as I feared--not much documentation in Whitney's hands. And besides he has a poor memory. I am positive that Paddy Stanton was never in the CP--it is news to me that Eve Smith was ever in our movement.

Of course it is the early period that we want Whitney for.In fact that is what we want everyone for as starting with 1945 and the publication of a regular press and an operational center we are not in bad shape. What we are lacking--and particularly as far as outside Toronto is concrned is the pre-1945 period. I didn't know that Birney was in so early.

It is apparent that you must see Fergusson and Hatty just as soon as possible. We need more on Blondin and Olson. We need more on how the Burnham shachtman dispute hit the Westcoast. I recall the Lamont experience and Canadian unionism very well--I had big arguments with him on his support of the war. Paddy swung right over behind me is those disputes.

It would be good to drop in on Bill with the notes as I have typed them up. He will be able to correct any misinpressions and of course spellings of names--and in the meantime will have remembered some worthwhile things. You come through very good on the tape--but there are many places that I can not decipher Bill--and of course Lillian is off the the side --with little possiblity of cutting in on Bill.It would be good to have Lill there

Incidentlly--we have had an oreitnation to the CCF-NDP for many years but we entered only twice--the early pre WW II entry of MacDonald and the 1952 entry.

Of course you will have to have a talk with Ruth and Reg. They should help us check out some things that Bill and Fergy say.And of course we wabt to know when and how they came to the movement.Get Fergy before seeing them --and then they can check out both Bill and Fergy. Does Ruth have any documentation before 1945--did she pick up the files that we thought Whitney had.

I thought that the way things were going there in the last phases of the last tape that Bill and Lil were raising the issue of their membership. Who else wasthere in the background.

I am managing to get things on the way here. Big plans. First finish up the studentradicalization project for Brian B---work on the history of the section, thendewelop some talks I gave on the concept of the labor party and the revolutionar vanguard....then I want to work on the Canadian [illegible] that I wanted very badly to deal with for the

pre convention discussion on Canadian nationalism.

Harry, Claire Lynda and othersgot together a week or so ago and are now in the process of dcing some concentrated studying and preparinf precis of various aspectsof the question of Candn nationalism that we want to come tc grips with.

I suppose you have heard about the plans to have Joan come in here and Jacquie and John go out there...and the latest about the Red Circle and Old Mole fuzing. This will probably see some of the RCT pulling out of the Leaguein order to put this new united operation into high gear sc that it can really challenge the League on every front, The RCT will henceforth serve as an agency for this new operation within cur movement. The RCt will alsc be sending people out to Vancouver and tc Edmonton I would think.

I hope youcan keep cn top of th s little project I have sent your way as I expect to be right intc the area that you are researching within a month if not sooner.

comradely

Ross

Maurice will be on our back. The SWP investigation on the gay movement and its possiblities has been completed- they dont see it as having a national perspective. I suppose the CO will be issuing something on this along the same line. I see some ra lway workers in BC have broken from the international

May 27/73
Toronto
334 Queen Street West

Bill Whitney
1731 East 62nd ~~Street~~ Avenue
Vancouver

Dear Bill;

It was good to hear your voice again on the tape that you were so good as to work out with Nick.

I have typed up the gist of what you said on the tape so that Nick and you can see what I got off it. A few spots were somewhat rough and probably need to be straightened up--corrections on spellings of names too. I heard Lil's voice in the background but it was not clear enough to decipher her contribution--which I am sure was valueable. I would apprecite any additions either ~~yours~~ if you think worthwhile.

It just so happened since taking off your tape I went through a tape that a comrade had with Phil Heibert now back in Saskatoon again. He says that the first Trotskyist that he ever met was a fellow by the name of Bill Bloudin(that is the way that it comes out on the tape) but it seems to me that it is ~~Rankin~~ who you mention.(Blondin) It appears that Phil met him first back in 1921--then again in Vancouver in the thirties where he was a member of the Workers Party(Fourth) According to Heibert he came from Saskatchewan.

According to Heiberts the first Trotskyist in Vancouver was a woman by name Margaret Campbell --"I think she was the person who started the Trotslyist movement in Vancouver." He recalles you Bill--when you were 19 or 20 when he heard you speak. He says we had a small group on the univ rsity.

I was suprised to read of the role of Birney. I had no idea that he played such a large role in the founding of the movement. As you probably know he recruited Hansen and Myra Tanner weiss to the movement when he was on staff at Salt Lake City univeristy. This requires that we investigate Birney and not skip over his defection at the time of the Burnham-Schachtman split. Do you know more about Birney ?

Yourcomments about Stanton coming from the CP suprise me. He always denied having any CP experience to me. I knoew Paddy very well--he lived with me for a year or so . But he was capable of making a story ---the bare bones truth was often not quite interesting enough for him. I was leaving your comments on this open to question, but Heibert is also quite clear that he came out of the CP. It is odd that Heibers says nothing on the tape about Burki or the ~~Faulk~~ Faulkners He mentions Fergy's trips into Saskatoon.

I am locking forward to hearing anything more you think useful (ENDS)

May 30, 1973
554 Queen Street West
Toronto

Saskatoon

Dear Phil (C)?

At long last I managed to get down to taking the interview that you had with Joe Young some while back from the tape. I am enclosing a copy of what you told him about your experience in the revolutionary socialist movement. It is very good and useful. As a matter of fact I was immediately able to send some of the information along to Whitney in Vancouver. He made no mention of Margaret Campbell who you say was the founding Vancouver Trotskyist. What you say about Clendin fills out what he has told me

I gather from what you told Joe you never did know Joe Burki who used to be in the Streamstown-Lloydminster area, or the Faulkners--particularly Effie. ~~[illegible]~~ and George Faulkner. They all had a CP experience before coming to Trotskyism

I am sending along the copy of what you said to Joe so that you can correct anything that I may have heard wrong, so that you can change any improper emphasis and so that you can think things over after reading it and ad anything you think worthwhile. You would be suprised how valuable some incidental comments are. For instance Whitney says that Earl Birney played the key role in getting things underway in Vancouver. This throws a different light on Birney's entire role in the Canadian revolutionary socialist movement. It is now apparent to me that he played a very big role whereas up until now I thought it was an incidental one. He came around several times at the height of the Vietnam war protests and in fact wrote a poem which he read at Eaton auditorium. It is now apparent that I must have some talks with him--and in fact start to find out where he is right now

I also listened to your talk on the Regina unemployed struggle. It is also very good and in fact as soon as I can get some help I will take it off the tape. I think we should publish it --all the more that this is the centennial of the RCMP which played such a role in it.

Thankscagain for your help already given and yet to come.

I am very sorry that I did not squeeze out the time to see you when I was last in Saskatoon. I hope Maria Fischer and others drop in on you from time to time and that you manage to keep up with our press

with socialist greetings

Ross Dowson

May 31, 1973
334 Queen Street west
Toronto

Olynikk
Bisset

Dear Nick

Several weeks ago I was going through some unassorted papers and came across the copies of several items by Trotskyi that are in your possession--particularly the September 6, 1939 letter that the old man wrote to you personally.

I pulled them together and sent them off to the United States, specifically to George Breitman who has been editting the various volumes that Pathfinder Press has been putting out of the old man's last incidental writings.

They were extremely happy to get them. I have received a letter from them thanking you for them three items.

Now they are wondering if there is anything more. Have you seen the various volumes covering the latter years? When they started them they put the first 4 volumes in an enlarged format to accomodate repreoducing full pages of the old New and Fourth International where many of the items appeared. But the more recently published volumes are coming out in standard book size format. They are resetting everything. Now they have decided to go back and re-do the first four volumes--to reset all that material and publish these volumes, the new editions, in standard book size

The deadline for the new editions is approaching and so if you have anything else or know anyone who has anything else it would be very good if I were in a position to turn it in within the near future. They of course do not need the originals--xerox copies are very good . The new edition of the 1939-40 writings is going to include the forward to the proposed pamphlet which was among the items you gave me ---I gather. Nonetheless in another paragraph in the letter they mention an item they are looking for and think you might have. Here is what they say;

"For one thing, Trotsky mentions a pamphlet, for which the foreword was written which is presumably on the Ukranian question, and we would like to have a copy of it."

You will recall that project we were working on---the resetting in Russian of an index to the Russian Bulletin. I never heard from them again and the project slipped my mind. I had told them everything you told me. Well, the other day they announced the publication of the whole works. Crescent Publications backof the bookstore has a copy of the set. Why don't you go down and haveva look at it. I think that it is very expensive as few copies were published and it is going to libraries which have lots of dough. If you would like a set and can afford it--tell John Riddell that I think that you should have the set at what it actually cost Crecent Pulications.

I would come out and see you about all this--and even bring the set with me--but I am out at the camp and will probably be here except for the odd week-end well into September. I hope this note finds you in good health and. Give my best regards to Mary and those daughters of yours

warmest regards

Ross

Ukrainian page - Robitnychi Visti

Remind me to have a talk with you about Earl Birney

Type as letter

D3 #100

Notes on the League for a Revolutionary Party
uncorrected notes from a conversation with SG and EB June 10, 1973

Sg as a student at the University of Toronto (law) came across a n exchange of letters between a WK (1932) and the editors of Varsity. WK mistook some comments on the Marx brothers for abuse of Karl Marx. Sg made contact with WK [redacted] WK immediately involved him in a series of profound discussion on Capital and Hist of RR. K had become a Trotskyist, had joined the US Trotskyists when studying in Chicago a few years earlier. Upon his return to Toronto he joined the Canadian Left Opposition--late in 1931 or early 1932. However K had bome into conflict with Spector and had been expelled from the Canadian LO early in 1932. In Sg's opinion the conflict between WK and Spector was largely personal. Spector, who had been t he leading theoretician of the CP and a member of the executive committee of the CI appeared to be unable to cope with this somewhat precocious, arrogant and presumptious new convst to Trotskyism

SG considers Spector an intellectual but not a thinker--never wrote anything of account. Spector was [redacted] shortly [redacted] to recruit Jack MacDonald-a prôletarian leader but now deprived of any proletarian connections. WK expelled before Mac recruited.

While WK was on the outside of the LO--he was an active [redacted] propogandist for Trotskyism and was attempting to build the LO--to send His cintacts into the LO, hopi g thereby [redacted] to lay the basis for his re-admission. Sg was introduced to Tommy Mill, who was still a member of the WP. Mill had come from the YPSL's and had apparently beam recruited into the LO by WK. The Mills were an Engl ish proletarian family. SG joined the LO through Tommy Mill

The LO was quite small at that time . Possibly not more than 10 or 12 persons. Their most successful activity was a very effective class , a study group carried by Spector on the 1st 4 congresses of the Third International. The group was concentrated in Toronto with only a few connections outside of that city--possibly something i n Montreal. There were no documents, resolutions etc, as everything was discussed out in the Toronto meetings

It would appear that the US Trotskyists had urged WK to fight his way back into the Canadian LO. WK had the sympathy and support of the effective majority of the Toronto group. A. J had been expelled with him

Complicated negotiations were opened up for the readmission of WK. It was demanded that WK write a st tement to the effect that he had been wrong. One such statemet characterized in passing the elements that Spector had attracted to himself --it called them "canaille".--referring to Norm K, Ken J, Morris Q and Joe S apparently. Spector used this comment of WK's to great effect on those persons who he sensed were supporters of WK--he made Tommy sweat It took some months to work this out--some months and three or four statements before WK re-admitted

Spector's study classes had been effective in winning support to the LO, they were inspired. But the big appeal were the series of mewtings that Spector and MacDonald held on the German Crisis at the Victory Theatre. The Spartacus Youth League had been formed and was soon proving to be the main area of recruitment. Sg was assigned to that area. There were many disputes in the move et. In the dispute between WK and Spector, Macdonald stayed on the sideline. Generally speaking Spector's expulsion from the CP and the isolation of the LO broke Spector but he many underwent a revival--he rose to the challenge of the German crisis.

A Student League of Canada was organized as a Marxist group, with a publication The Soapbox, on the U of T campus. Ben B, Mike F, Sg and Eric R were editors of the paper (see file at U of T library --also Workers Voice according to sg, is on file at U of T library) The CP moved in on the Student League, prominent among them were Stanley Ryerson , a class mate of sg, and Leo Warsaw.

Sg is not clear what the issues were that were the cause of the split in 1933(late) that lead to the formation of the LRWP. WK's critiesisms covered a wide field, lack of effective activity by the Lo(now called the Workers Party) not enough effort to root the movement in the working class low level and interest in theory. The new group called itself the LRWP right away. The LRWP met B.J. Field(Max) after he had split from the US Trotskyist formation. WK and Field became quite close

LRWP was a very active organization, with its press (it quickly set u its own print shop, it was well organized and disciplined. It held street corner meetings regularly, published some pamphlets--it won Dan J and

3--notes ~~xhixxgg~~ of conversation with sg

jd from the CCYM, it managed to make a few useful connections with trade union militants such as Fred Bates of Niagara Falls, president of a steelworkers local, but it never became a national organization in any real sense. Possibly built something in Montreal. Its maximum size was in the ~~[illegible]~~ neighborhood of 50, with about 30 real activists. In 1936 is sent WK to Spain. EB considered that she was an ortho x Trotskyist. It considered the WP to be soft, ineffectual and inactive.

while the war smashed it, it was already collapsing before the war. It tended to fall apart. WK failed as a leader, he tended to head up clique formed around personalities and petty issues

It had no international connections. In the US with the defeat of the Hotel workers strike the group around Fields turned in on itself and melted away. Looking backwards, sg is of the opinion that its lack of international connections and an international perspective was the key to its decay and collapse. EB and sg were in Buffalo in the very last period, and when the war broke out, and did not see the process of decay

June 14, 1973
R. Dawson
c/o Jim Mitchell
R.R. # 1, Selby, K0K 2Z0
Ontario.

(Nick)
(S)
Vancouver

Dear Nie;

I hope you got my correspondence flowing out of your interview with Whitny That aspect of things is going forward, not too rapidly, but forward. This last weekend I had an interesting talk with a leading Fieldite which gives me an new insight into our problems in the thirties. I am working on Brian's project and trying to keep up with things in general. Our work on Cdn nationalism has bogged down a bit--Zane is working on the camp project, Lynda is on holdays, Abbie is in hospital, Gordon is trying to get things moving in N Toron to xxxx Harry is doing some work and right now I continue to gather material for when I can move into that area.

Our press I see is xxxxx managing to keep clear of the big resources issue. Lewis is calling for public owership of the oil interests, more locals pull out of the internationals. But the coming ISR is going to carry a version of the Quebec convenion document and of Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism.. John R in passing over the weekend said that seventy man hours were spent in preparing the Quebec document for publication. He didn't say how extensive the revisions are on Canada and the Crisis. We were going through all that with the plenum reports--the final version in the bulletin often had little to do with what we heard. I am waiting to see what they did to these documents--we will have to examine them closely.

Of course the big news is the continuing defection of the RCT supporters. Nothing we can do about this. It is inevitable. As soon as the Red Circle and the Old Mole fused to lau ch the Revolutionary Marxist Group the RCT had big interests in giving it some real clout. We will have more defections particulalry if any useful issue comes along, right up until the world congress .So we are going to have an effective opponent in many areas. It is hard to see the way ahead with

The present leadership has sugge ted that the convention it established itself. It certainly set itself off in a new course. The problems they now pose around the women's ministry seem to have startled Joynce and Isolde into that realization. I do not know how they intend to handle it. I suggested in the first informal discussion on Monday that we open a discussion in the Vancouver branch--a written one --not circulate the letters but give everyone a chance to really think things over thenprepare something--with the centre participating if it felt necessary. This brought on quite a reaction. They feel their leadership is at stake--they must lead and not take Vancouver. They held another discussion today but after the first one I did not feel called upon to go to all the difficulty of going into the city. I said essentially what I want to say at the first meeting. They have not brought it into the PC--thse meetings are you might call an enlarged bureau. They havent yet set up a bureau. The discussion was a poor one. Dick led off with my following him. Veery early Art suggested that there may well be a fu damental question of principle separating us--with you know who holding a reformist position. Dick excitedly stressed that the NDP question was a lodaded bomb for us. They are extremely nrevous about the international leadership a d now the Revolutionary Marxist Group hitting us from the left--acussing us of tali endism, adaptationism to reformism

Yes as Isolde says in her letter our fundamental orientation is at stake. At one point Dick said we do not campaign for the NDP to implement its program--the pro gram

of the party. He even suggested that we never make demands on a government. He was checked here by John who pointed out that the SWP called upon Washington to send federal troops to enforce integration of the schools some years back. Dick said that we would never formualte critical support of a government--even an NDP government. Once the NDP is in office they tend to equate the party and the govvernment with the state itself. They appeared to t ink it quite novel when I seaprated them out

It is clear to me that what we are confronted with is a tactical question. In the process of discussions of such matters it sometimes happens that some comrades may reveal some undeveloped but nosethelss reformist illusions. I do not see that anyonehas been revealed to hold such illusions but the center, particularly Dick seems hell-bent on demonstrating that that is what is involved. Whatbhe is really doing is adapting to ultra left pressure

It may well be now that Joyve and Isolde have sent in what are generally excellent letters --I hope that they have shown them around--that the center will back off . The response of both Joan and Isolde must truly startle them, particlarly with Isolde stating that she agrees with Cynthia .Riddell did not say anything--did not comit himself. More and more he plays this role--during the discussions he appears to be above and not part of the argument, then after dispensing his favora-seeing merit in this and merit in that argument, landing down with Dick and Jacquie. Dick is much committed to war on the question of the ministry, But John has preserved a position that allows him to tone it down and find some kind of compromise.

We will see. . I for one would welcome a written discursion. But they are very fearful--for they know that anything that goes on in the league will find its way to the RMG.

Can you imagine. They made a big deal about Maurice sending me the copy of Jacqu'e's letter and Dick threatned to pass a motion prohibiting me from replying to it.. It would appear that Cynthia and Maurice are byyond the pale. You have to be a one hundred percenter it now appears. I told him in a nice way to go to hell. The others were embarassed but that is the atmosphere they have been generating around the movement

But I must get this off so that you can turn the enclosed letter over to Maurice. He and Cynthia might be quite upset how things went with that. I do not have Maurice's address.

warmest regards

Ross

I finished that excellent Shopsy bologna yesterday.

June 14, 1973
R Dowson c/o Jim M
R.R. # 1
Selby, KOK 2Z0
Ontario

Abbie Weisfield
Toronto East General

Dear Abbie;

I am very sorry that I was unable to get out to see you when I was in Toreto ober the last weekend. I went in Friday afternoon and leftTuesday morning. It is hard to believe but in all that time I never had a chance to get up to see you. And I am all the more regretful since Zane told me that tommorrow they are operating on you and that you have had some trouble over and above what one would expect being tra ped in bed ower the past period.

In all that period I had time to myself only on Monday and I selfishly used it up going around the bookstores seeing what was new and useful. Naturally I found some material of use to us--- The Decolonization of Quebec--an analysis of left-wing nationaliśm by SH and H Miller---------- Nationaliśm, Communism and Canadian Labor by Abel la etć.

Just a dizzy round of meeting after meeting. John Steel wants to have a talk with me about the NDP work--which I wanted also in view of the fact that they repleced Hans with Kate and Mary as our fraction leader at the Left Caucus --Hans who has been a leading activist in this arena for about a decade and the one who carried the struggle against Peter H and Marv G repleced by two comrades of very little experience. A PC meeting on Saturday---it was insisted that I go to a going-away social for John S and Jacquie Saturday evening. On Sunday I go to Niagara on the Lake fora talk with a former leading activist of our movement in the early thirties. Sunday night a PC meeting which didn't come off as the key persón--Walter didn't get there. That meant the PC meeting had to be held on Monday night. So then they arranged another meeting to discuss a specific situation in Vancouver among other things in the afternoon.

I tried to contact Harry and Saben@ but they appear to have been out all w weekend. I managed to get to Gord and we had a bit of a talk before going to the going away party at Vern's . As it became apparent that I would not be seeing you I went to the Toronto office for your phone number but they didn't even know what hospital you were in. Gord told me that he and Harry and Dale and Ron Rosenthal had been up to see you

Zane came into the camp late last nite and told me that they had to do some extra surgery on you so that they could carry out the stretching process satis factory. I hope that as soon as you come out of the operation and you are in condition to think about yourself and the world---as soon as you come out of the sedation---that you will rent à TV--one that is on a swivel and has a selector with a wide choise of stations. I would be pleased to make a contribution to t cost. If you can get a wide choice of stations TV is quite good. While out here with only a choice of 2 stations I have seen several good programs such as Bronowski on the Ascent of Man, and Georges Rude on the Crowd in Revolution. The two that I swa of the latter on University on the Air were very good--Marxist.

The big news of course over the weekend is the continued defection of the RCT

last week--Peterboro youth, then Toronto youth--Monday saw Arnie Dorothy and Bob pull out of the West branch --and probably Peter H will go from the East. The RMG is going to be a formidable opponent. The RCT is probably planning of more defections at suitalbe moments in order to help build the RMG and at the same.time minimize ourselves. It is hard to imagine what Mandel and company see in this. They probably cynically think that it is udeful in their fight with the L-T- tendency. Our own operation doesn't seem to be grabbi g hold of things. Steve Harding was pulling out of things in Ottawa but he came down to the camp and I had a good talk with him--managing to convince him to hold on. The center seems agreeable to losing John W but I gave them shit about it. I hope that John R goes to see him and turns him back.

Wayen has been dropping in here to spend the night. Ellie and he are researching their school work at Queen's in Kingston. He teslls me that he came across about 6 ~~fuckin~~ fellows who are in Waffle at York--all considerthemselves to be of the Vladmir Ilych view. Incidnetly when you are up to it I would like to talk to you about your future school work. I am not at all consivinced that it is a good think to move out of science into sociology.

I hope that this note finds you shpaing up after the operation and getting ready to shipout. I will certianly come to see you regardless, next time in town. I dont know when that will be however. This last time back required me to take the local bus to Desrernoto thereby doubling the bus time and having to walk up from Highway 2. I guy finally gave m e a lift just north of 401--I hada bag that weightd about 30 pounds but felt like 60

all the best

Ross Dowson

Thursday June 14. 1973
R. Dowson c/o J M
R.R. # 1 Selby, K
Ontario

Vancouver
Dear Maurice

Well, with your letter in hand I certainly did not come into the PC meeting on the weekend cold. I came in Friday. They wanted me to read the various items of correspondence. In the pile there was one letter from Jacquie(not the one you sent me a copy of, and one from Joan) along with a little note that Jacquie had several letters (at home I would guess.)

Your letter was handed to me while I was reading the correspondence. Of course there was great interest in my receiving a letter from Vancouver in the midst of the great controversy. There is a great unease in the center as you can imagine these days. The RCT defections are one thing---on Monday night three ~~xxxxxxx~~ pulled out of the West Toronto branch and probably on Tuesday another will pull out of the East branch adding to the previous defections from the Toronto and the Peterboro youth. Then they are very much worried about me--what am I thinking, what am I doing and the comrades of the former United Tendency. It was apparent to me that the ~~xxxxxxxx~~ RCT made the biggest headway at the convention but they pretended that they did. Well, since then several leading comrades have dropped out. One of them is John Wilson. When I was in over the weekend I gave them shit for their tendency to accept this situation and demanded that John Riddell go and see John and convince him otherwise . Steve Harding came out to the camp a couple of weekends ago and I spent sometime convincing him that he must not leave the movement. The leadership is quite permissive when it comes to dissidents, it would seem.

At any rate, rightly or wrongly (designeng to overcome their fears and curiosity) I told Jacquie when her letters were missing from the file that I had received a copy of one of her letters from you or Cynthia and even offered to put it in the file so that Phil and Dick could read it before our discussion. This appears to have caused them greater upset than ever. Such a dicussion as this, which has gone into the NDP fraction and the branch executive, I had assumed would have seen the circualtion of these letters to such persons as Cynthia and there could not possibly be any objection that a leading comrade would send me a copy as chairman so that I would be acquainted with the situation before the meeting-- I did not get it at the camp as you anticipated but they probably held it up

Well, as you probably now know they are all up tight that Cythia xeroxed the letter and sent me a copy. They are all up tight about what I am going to say to you. It is hard to understand why. After all I am chairman and one might think that I would conduct myself in a responsible way. At anyrate I sugeested that we should have a written discussion in Vancouver with the center participating if and when it thinks necessary. This disturbed some comrades --they see it as a mistaken concept of leadership..

I participated in one discussion on this situation--but at the time neither Joyce nor Isolde's letters were available to me. Since that discussion I have read both of these letters. I would assume that these comrades have shown Cynthia their letters.

I think both of these letters are very good contributions to the discu sim, Reg has not written or at least his letter was not available. It seems clear to me that what is involved here with the ministry is a tactical question--the other opinion challenges our fundamental orientation to the NDP. But perhaps you noticed that at the convention Dick as reporter openly dissociated himself from my document

on the NDP(1970)vIt would seem to me that Dick is having some second thoughts about our entire orientation....he has had great difficulty,as our press shows, with this orientation over t e past year. It seems that our chief concern these days is what the Mandel-Maitain-Frank leadership and now the RMG will say about our line--and of course they are on a ultra left-sectarian trip on such questions.

Yes, I think both Isolde and Joyce have said the key things that need be said. But thanks for the correspondence anyway. And I hope that my naivite has not caused you any trouble. I think that your action is both correct and highly responsible.

I will be writing Nick

comradely

Ross Dowson

I will be following this, although I did not stay for the second discussion + their decision as to how to proceed In view of Isolde's + Joyce's contribution I see no need to intervene at this time

June 19 1973

Vancouver;

Dear Nic; (H.S.)

It is possible that this note will cross some mail from you. I have not been in Toronto for a week now and there may be several new developments around the women's ministry dispute so what I say may be out of date.

But this weekend Phil came out with George apparently to have a talk with me George went back to town with Kathy D who was notwell and so I ended up with a short talk with Phil--with whom I disgarved all down the line He then left me with a draft of a letter that attempts to take up Joyce 's and Isolde's communication on this matter and expresses his thoughts.. He left them with me to rd read and then decamped with other comrades for a swim. After reading them I went to find him and not succeeding left the document in his coat pocket along with a short note expressing my disagreement and telling him that I would be working at the odlge. He left without talking with mefurther--I suppose he thought it was useless.

They are very anxious that I concur with them. When last in Toronto I was tied up in endless little meetings all designed to swing me behind them. One xxx of the prblems is that they do not want to bring anything of this type up befbre the PC because of the RCT representation on the PC. Then I find that they haven't got around to working out their ideas about a political bureau and so this has not come before the PC for concurrence. So they are now operating through what they call the central office....an instrument which has no status in our movement--at least not yet.

Not only is the presence of Walter of the RCT being used to justify the paralysis of the PC but of course an extension of this--the existence of the Revolutionary Marxist Group and its press is constituting a tremendous pressure on the central office clique to take ultra left positions

I think I told you that I made a proposal that this question of the ministry should be discuccsed in a documentatory form on the level of the Vancouver branch and that the PC intervene if and in the manner that it thinks desireable. They scotched this as signifiying a defaulting of leadership. I also hoped without much confidence that they would turn back and concede that what we have here is a tactical question and not a matter of principle. Well, they are going ahead-from Phil's note. ..with an article in the next issue of the paper-they say "two weeks from now" as of last weekend. They see the discussion despite the great weight they give it as only involving the Vancouver branch exeuctive, and if adviseable leading NDP comrades in Vancouver--and what they calll the center.

Did you see Isolde and Joyce's letters ?

I now do not know how things stand. In my note to Phil which he certainly took into the CO I questioned the authority of the so-called central office." It is possible that they are pulling back regardless of that. You will best know where things now stand.

But it seems to me that you should consider the adviseability as a member of the PC sending in a letter of your views--and you should consider addressing it to the Political Committee so that the discussion has to take place on the PC plane.

It would be best should thinks be proceeding in an unfavorable way that you do so in such a way that it is apparent that you do so on your own initiat ve-- without at this time appearing to be in consultation with me. I do not think that we should ignore or flaunt the intense concern that they are showing about my relations with them

They are hell bent on making a whole series of sectarian moves with regards to our NDP work--but it seems to me that we have a real interest that it not be demonstrated on a conjunctural and tactical question if we can help. In y discussion with Phil he revealed that they are preparing to take on the 1970 document that appeared in my name that stikks by the connceit of critical but unconditional su pport of the NDP. Gord Doctorow was in contact with a Kitchenre comrade and it would appear that they are already having private discussions preparing th cerrain persons for this switch.

Think it over

Of course an intervention by yourself does not have to be anything like a difinitive contribution.

comradely

Ross

R. Dawson c/ J M
R.R. # 1 Selby, KOK 2Zo
Ontario

Note to self, in RD`s handwriting, dated June 21/73

My relationship with the ‘’operation’’ is of necessity considerably different than that of other comrades. I am not (of necessity) able to work in the different areas of the movement`s involvement – I can`t work in the unions, in the NDP, in the abortion ‘’coalition’’ – I am limited to the internal life of the movement and in a minority (consultative) or advisory role.

This role would be satisfactory and could develop if there was a developing process of harmony, even at this time very limited, in our ideas. However this is not so. There is now not only a matter for instance of a disagreement on the women`s ministry in BC but they insist in widening the significance of the disagreement. Art`s comments at the CO meeting where he suggested there were probably going to be revealed some basic disagreements with me. Phil`s comments to me at the camp where he said that matters concerning our stance with regards to the NDP had only been touched on at the convention and would have to be developed in the immediate period (involving the slogan ``Win the NDP to Socialism’’ and the characterization of our orientation to the NDP as one of ‘’critical but unconditional support’’). These involve a new and continuing course that the operation has been undertaking over the past year of revising our views.

There are also chickens coming home to the roost. For instance the farce of last year`s or was it early this year`s conference on abortion. They decided that they would make the coalition explicitly feminist, dump the petition, etc. It was also obvious that this process caused them to dump the concept of a coalition – it caused them to demark themselves from all other currents as not being 100% feminist (every mother a willing mother, every child a wanted child – the petition saying abortion, a matter between the woman and her doctor was impure – cut out the doctor – confrontation with population explosion supporters.) The demarking of course meant no coalition – but only ourselves.

My relations with John R. re postal workers – a likely story;
re Amchitka – pulled off as a secret – exposed;
Zane`s letter hidden

(end)

July 3, 1973
R. Dowson , c/o J Mitchell
R.R. # 1
Selby, Ont. K0K 2Z0

Dear Dave and Jennie

It was around this time, and maybe even earlier that I promised that I would see to your receiving the money you advanced for the lot at the Camp.

When I enquired a cotple of weeks ago as to whether the $700 had been sent to you I was suprised to see that it had not.

The camp continues to expand and flourish. However we cotinue to be plagued by the fact that the radical youth of today which the movement continues to have to base itself upon (due to the continued lag of the radicalization of the working class) has no accumulated resources for such a thing as a lot at a camp. I was hoping that the funds could be borrowed from some other area for another short period. However it does not not appear possible.

I am therefore advancing ~~xxxxxxx~~ some money from elsewhere. Not the total amount as that much is not available--but a slab of it. Possibly you are planning to use it for a vacation or some other purpose. I hope this amount-$475.00 meets your immediate needs. I will send you the rest as rapidly as possible--within a couple of months I hope.

your truly

Ross Dowson

the above address is the mailing address of the camp--I am up here for the summer.

With deterio we lost Vietnam solidarity
I see give up NDP strategy - what perspective has
our pan Can movement - what will glue it together
& give it viability?

July 3, 1973

odds and ends at Poundmaker.
Charlie Lee and Judy came to see me June 23 Or 24 to appeal to me to reconstitute the tendency. Hee main thrust of his argument was that the movement is going down the drain--that it is leaderless and a ge ral demoralization is settin in. I stalled him--told him that we should be considering it but in my opinion the time was not now--we should consider it but delay any action. His chief concern was the obvious decision that this operation has made to dump our strategic orientation to the NDP--the concept of critical but unconditional support of the NDP. --but of course there were many other matters--lack of leadership even in a routine basis. The operators didnt come to grips with Carlie and Judy's de destination--Ottawa, St Kus or Hamilton until I went in a few weeksneds ago and pressed them --even arranging the meeting with Charlie to make the decision that we should continue the operation in St Kits
Incidnetly on the July 1 weekend Cahrlie raised the matter of Caral---he was cocmpletely correct in his criticism of the menorandum that the operators sent out on CARAL--rejecting their concept of opposition to it. I have been pondering as to whtehr I should answer this June 28 memo---and so I urged Chaelie to let his opinion be known to the PC.
On July 1st weekend Vic laughingly noted that the operatorers are concentrating Ned, Cush and (Ukranian comrade) in the north and that Harry K is expresig all arou d disagreement with the operators and with passion.

I had to move in on the first camp weekend arranged by St Kits--The operators failed to come across with a speaker. Charlie was in difficuly and so I ended up givinthe two lectures. Kitchener-Waterloo comrades were impressed and Laurel phoned in asking me to address their forum. I de ured.. The June30--July 2 weekend saw only Art here first day---later Phil and Gary arrived. I attended the first lecture by Wendy.--noe of the male leaders did. I spoke--took on Mark P's absurd comments that we are going to go through a period of outgrowing the state, private property and the family,Iexplained the usefulness of Engels origing of the family to educate women of the source of their oppression-- unfortunately Joe Y took the line that men are an oppressor sex. I sent mote to Wendy that she had to take on this concept--which she did in a veiled way. Charlie later told me that he had a discussion with Joe about his petty bourgeois guilt concept

joe

After one of the June weekends I had to walk up from Deserento with my bag
On Wednesday or so they asked me to phone back. I tried to get the phone for over an hour--but our parties held onto it. I did not go into that pc meeting. Riddell said that he would be dropping in on the camp on his way down to Montreal for his holiday. He never did drop in. Art came out the July first weekend. Before his coming John K sent me a copy of Zane's resignation with an enclosure that attempted to put the responsibility for the dissappearnace of Zane's letter from the file onto Art.

Zane never toad me of his intention to resign. When I spoke to him on the phone when in Toronto ignornt of his action--he never let on that he had resgiedd When I later phoned him he said that he had gathered by my conversation that I did not know--but he still didn't tell me. He said he would be out to the camp to pick up his stuff and would talk to me then. He came out and spent maybe two or more hours here but never came up to the lodge to see me. He appaears to have had a long talk with Jim--he affirmed that he had taken back his resgiantion. What is he going through and why doesn't he want to take me into his confidence ?

Jim came to the cabin this morning. He thinks that this fall we (?) should seriously consider breaking from the LSA/LSO(He has a very light minded attitude to setting up another group) around a theoretical journal. He doesn't for all his experience understand the importance of the internati onal question and the matter of a group defining itself in relation to others--the LSA and the RMG for instance.

J.M

When I was last into Toronto a going away party was held for Jacquie and John S at Vern's place. Very strange. They gave them a TV set, something in the n neighborhood of $150 rather than the usual 10 dollar book. John gave a lengthy and tedious opening speech the purpose of which was hard to understand- dealing with the problem of transfers or colonizations in the Trotskyist movement, the opinions and experiences of various world sections as seen in the eyes of spokespersons and in relation to the problems in vast Canada. About all it did was link us to the world movement. Most tedious.. Then Jaquie gave a lengthy and equally tedious talk which tended to merely build up the various persons in the operation. I went out in the garden as I had no seat and it was going on and on. It continued to go on so I left. A really sick affair.

At the last PC meeting that I attended they finally set up a bureau. It is composed of the officers--less myself--the resident officers. In a meeting the prvious night attended by Phil, Art and John and myself John conceded that there was not an established group of leaders in the LSA that could be considered to logically form a bureau--that there is no established cadre that wouldn(t of necessity include the Toronto political committee. I had raised the matterfof Dick when they were talking of the personel without defining it to me as the officers---I told them that Dick was their ideologue. I wonder what effect that had. So Jacquie and John have left. for Vancouver. What lies behind this. This was decided in my absence. Surely it cannot be designed to allow Joan to come in to Toronto. I think that when she was last here as organizer she very clearly revealed that she can only form a part of a strong cadre--that she is not a strong political leader herself. Do they think that Vancouver needs bolstering.. But they have brought Grant into the center. The RCT has not send anyone in to work over Vancouver or Edmonton for that matter. Their whole tendency has been to build the central leadership and let the various centers go---Dowson over extended the movement in every sense--the camp the journal, the press and the colonization.

On the women's minstry. With my failure to go into Toronto(the weekend I didnt couldn't get in via phone Phil came out to the camp. It would appear that both Goerge A and Phil came out to talk to me. George had drawn up a 10 or 12 point statement on what was involved--where they stood. Phil had with him a lengthy statement. George had to leave unexpectedly as Kathy suddenly took ill. Phil met me --we had a talk--I expressed all my previous disagreement and he left me his statement. We made arrangments for him to go over it woth me after I had read it. I took notes and went to find him. He had gone swimming. I put the doucment in his jacket pocket with a letter outlining my objection. and telling him that I was at the cabin when he returned. He must have returned late--then again after redding my note he may have concluded that discussion was useless--at anyrate he returned to Toronto without coming to the cabin to discuss with me. When I went into Toronto they arranged a meeting to discuss the ministry. Dick was invited. John wanted me to develop my views. But I told him that as far as I was concerned there was nothing new and therefore I had nothing to add. Dick vigorously intervened to affirm that they had already heard my ideas and he did not thereofre understand why the meeting.. At the campPhil had stated that his document was really only designed to pull their ideas together that it was not a PC statement for instance. I now learn from Maurice that Phil statement has gone out to Vancouver and is being circulated. I have received a copy of a communication addressed by Cynthia to the PC with regards to the whole discussion She puts it well. Now the ball is in their corner--what are they going to do. with it. It would seem that they have pulled back a long way from the course that they originally set themselves. No doubt Joynce and Isolde's opposition caught them off gurad. As Joan wrote them--the leadership has not established itsef. And of course such actions as this do much to disestablish it

It was in the process of my discussion with Phil around his document that he described the question of our orien ation to the NDP as being some unfinished convention business---Dick's characterizing the 1970 document as Dowson's

If I recall correctly he said that this business will be finished at the December plenum of the Central committee.

The last two issues of LC dealing with the Manitoba election and the NDP government mark an important stage in the process of dumping our strategic orientation to the NDP. Harry K came to the camp complaining that the June 11 issue was a scandal--but he had not yet really read the June 25 issue which goes even further.

June 11 issue--head-NDP must fight for socialism--a demand on the NDP instead which it of course is not meeting-- doesn't put what it must do in meangingful transtional concepts---although this is partially met by box which syas the issues are so and so and what to do. Three pages on Manitoba NDP--sustained crticism. No element of real identity with the NDP. What is our basis of support--what distinguishes the NDP from the bourgeois parties---!?!

"the NDP is based on, financed by and ultiately responsible to the labor movement." A peculiar construction. Elsewhere it says the qualitative difference is that the NDP is"labor controlled". Of course it is controlled by the labor aristocracy, the trade union brass and the parliamen ary caucus of the NDP party leadership. The question is simpler than that---the NDP is labor based. The Editors never have understood the basis of the NDP brass opportunism. They have them "helping to make the system run better for the businessmen." Then why do the bosses oppose it ? What they are really trying to do is mae the system with all its built in antiworking class meahanisms, make the capitalist system work for the workers --to make it more tolerable for the workers--without ruffling the feathers of the capitalists if possible.--make it work for all,you might say

It seems a matter of great concern to the editors to clear the NDP of the label of socialism in several places. It would be better for us since Schreyer calls self social democrat to pick it up and say what you have to do to be worthy of this label

paragrph on what an NDP electroal victory would do could be usefuly counter posed to the operations views on the women's ministry. ..page 4

the attacks on reformismare so unrelieved as to find their way into the true north---editr doesn't understand that the Manitgba NDP has turned over censorship to the federal government---quite correctly it would seem to me.

You would never know from this issue that the NDP has a majority only by basing itself on Desjardins and Borowski ...oh well. With this issue Mandel and company certainly cannot say we are tailing the reformists--the RCT - RMG is now calling our line to be sure

June 25 issue lead article shows no recognition of the vlue of the demand the appeal of the refo mist program of the NDP--are we opposed to presering the family farm---it would appear so. Report on the collpase of the Waffle with our program --but no explanation of its collpase

Gets into tendentious arguement as to where the masses are and how fast they do or do not want to move. Thus it ends up claiming that the NDP campaign is geared to put a damper on the masses' expectations. The clear impliaction of this is that the masses are to the left of the NDP straining at the leash,waiting for the word--which deosnt exactly explain our situation.. It should argue rather from what is necessary to be done--where we are at and whereware headed...from the objective point of view, not subjective

Peculiar article by Art on Keirans---evades Keirans natiinalism and substitutes an explanation that he is for public owership of resources only to promote private owership of manufacturing--ten practices one upmanship--need public ownership of all the key corporations

Incidently the lead a ticle actually says that Shreyers type campaign "does little, if anything, to advance the power and self confidence of the working people. " Why then are we supporting the NDP campaign, one must ask Our line is perhaps most clerly expressed in all places---Selling the Socialist Press.

-30-

P.4 (2)

It is hard to realize just how little there proved to be
The pre convention PC meetings ~~[illegible]~~ the serach for something to hold onto, the clique chorus---then the plenum through which they thought (they were) through a process of intense cultivation and pressures develping a new leadership layer--and then the convention.
The United Tendency--~~[illegible]~~
Yes, even at 56 I could have swung out in my old form, take them on frontally, really posed the alternatives that ovbiously Dennis sought--but what would have been the result, even the best possible result--a commencing all over again with very little. Nothing substantial came out of the struggle---Jayne, Gord --that is, the struggle at that stage.
For the struggle is still on. Some new elements have to come forward
It is apparent that they are not in what Jack B would call the present cadre
They are in ~~[illegible]~~ the small but developing newer elements--
How to play a role in this process. The last four months--the next few months are a wait and see

D3-#73

July 3, 1973

R. Dowsan c/o J Mitchell
R R # 1 Selby, Ont. K0K 2 Z0

Lou Donnelly
78 Barrie Road
Orillia, Ont.

Dear Lou;

Art Gray dropped down to the camp last weekend . He told me among other things that you have been under the weathor the last while--that you have been in hospital

I hope that this short note finds you back in action, at least, if not in first class condition. I understand that Jane is coming over for a vacation. That should indeed be welcome medicine.

When are you going to be dropping down to the camp. Over last summer and w now this, Jim Mitchell and a crew of comrades have wrought a considerable number of improvements. Our kitchen staff handles the group meals with ease and sleeping accomodation is now --well not first rate--but not far behind. The pump is working fine and the watwr is what they call potable. We even have a bath house--with a tub-washing machine-and running water.

NDP

I had a worthwhile talk with Art about the left caucus . It is now apparent with the Waffle defection that for the next period there is no viable left wing in the NDP. The Waffle ~~inxex~~ has retained the support of ~~them~~ its former forces but they are not involving themselves, even though holding NDP cards on ,in a fight with the right wing. The left is pretty well bolied down to ourselves and the elements that were tending to come our way but were diverted off in an ultra left direction by the positions adopted by the Mandel-Maitain-Frank element in the Fourth International. In Canada now we have a real British IMG operation--the ex-Wafflers around Penner formely calling themselves the Red Circle, The Old Mole group on the U of T campus and now the Revolutionary Communist Tendency--those who have left us and those who hold on for various reasons. No doubt much could be said of a critical character about our tactics at the Left Caucus meeting that Art attended but the real problem is that the our opposition- the Old Mole-Red Circle-ex RCT now calling themselves the Revolutionary Marxist Group do not have our strategic orietnation to the NDP. They do not really give critical support to the NDP and are not oriented to participating in the building of a braod left wing current in the NDP.

That was the overriding problem at the left caucus meeting. Whether the coming federal convention in Vancouver will allow us to pull anything effective togtehr is not yet clear. The Waffle-MISC operation here in Ontario bears watching as does its counterpart in Saskatchewan

Looking forward to seeing your smiling face and Hearing your limey accent shortly.

comradely
Ross Dowson

July 5, 1973
R. Dowson
c/o J Mitchell
R.R. # 1
Selby, Ont.
K0K 2Z0

Pathfinder Press

attention Jon Britton (Swp) New York

Dear Comrade Britton

Thanks very much for taking the trouble to inform me of your change of plans with regards to publishing my essay in "50 Years...." It sounds like a worthwhile one.

I see you have managed to get off the volume containing the Russian Bulletin--with the index typed rather than set by linotype. I have informed the sympathizer who investigated this at this end that it has been looked after.

For convenience I have enclosed a couple of clippings. I wonder if you would put them in the mail system for Intercontinental. The author of the two article on Cuba was formerly editor of the United Church Observer. He was bounced last year for his expressions of symptahy for the Palestine resistance to Zionism

comradely

Ross Dowson

On Thursday July 19, 1973 I challenged John R and Phil C to put their revisionist views of our strategic orientation to the NDP on paper and open a debate in the movement--I also told them that I intended to go off the payroll in September.

The meeting was informal prior to the PC meeting totake place that eveneing. Its purpose as far as John was concerend was to try to work out an agreement with me about the proposed ddsellution of the N Metro branch. They dont want to discuss this matter in front of Ruth T who is replacing Walter until the proposition is signed sealed and delivered (until I am lined up or at least my criticisms whatever they may think they are are used to provide adjusmtnets of the most gauche errors.

They do not appear to know that I tood Gordon that in my opinion we should go along with the disolution. He is not prepared to be organizer, they are not prepared to have Kushman Dymytichyn or ---- or push Bea to take over organizer or make a real contribution towards sustaining it so why should Gord, Harry etc break their ass to do so. Besides Gord thinks his silation from the downtown operation where the overwhleming bulk of the comrades are is bad for him politically. At anyrate they consult George and Gary and agree to proceded tonight with a short report--a progress report.

So I raise the matter of our fi ancial position and then tell them that I intend to go off payroll. I told them that I took the post of chairman in the interests df the international, that I havent changed my views on the key issues at dispute in the pre-convention discussion , that I am more convinced of the correctness of the ut views, that I am note prepared to write for the paper which in my opninion is irrelevant, that I am in total disagreement with the line that it is promoting on the NDP etc. They want my critisisms of the paper, on the NDP, that I should write them up. I ~~imdx~~ repeated Phil's conversation with me at the camp several weeks ago about the unifinished business of the convention....Dick's attack in his final words of the report on the concept of unconditional though critical support of the ndp as being Ross Dowson's view--his document. Suprisingly John R tried to mealy mouth that the document was mine and whn I blasted him he stepped back that Dick had never accepted t is formulation. ~~xmdxxmxhxxmxxhimxhxPhimxmpxmxm~~. He asked me to write up my critism--I told him very firmly that it was not my reposbbility to go thruogh the pased of LC with a fine tooth comb and argue the case with interpretation of this article and that parapgraph or sentence that the line has been changed. I sai d you have openly said you are changing the line. It is your responsibility to write it out and explain this to the membership and I charge you to do this

I do not recall Phil's reaction but John did show some disturbance about my inte ntion. Why did I have to go off the paytroll. I told him that they cannot be any elite in our move ent--persons on staff who do not write for the paper or speeak at the forums--that I was not old as Cannon and out of the picture etc I also said that by no means would they care for the results of the approach of my research that it i is agreed that I do in the camp. J said he expected my research to procede certain ways. I should ignore what this or that person might say about my not producing for the movement--that t ere was no reason for my to go off staff--that they underst ood that I was working for the movement etc. I told him my mind was mde up.

I thought this necessary to say now as in the first week in August everyone will be together in Oberlin and they will be able to tel l everyone and take any acti on they think appropriate.

Earlier that week I had a discussion with Lynda about her decision to infor m the leadership that she had changed her mind of Canadian national ism. I tried not to show my irritatioh. Iwould appear that Zane has pulled back and that no joint statement will appear. But she is going ahead she said. Her reasons are scanty She had a position which she does not now have and everyone should know. Her change of position is due to JackB's document and rethinking. She rejects the concept of the essence of nationalism being progressive. I asked here why now--answer-because I have changed my mind. I told her how it will be interpreted--just as we are supposed to be reopening the discussion--a real blow at the development of the discus ion to have this three person change of mind---it ~~wixhim~~ is a sort of stab in the back of Ross Dowson. Unfortunte how I turned the heat on her--do what you have to do--but it is a stab in the back. But when next I saw her she seemed to be bouncing. Gord is very harsh both on Dennis and on Lynda. One would think that Lynda would have gone to the meting on the Thrsday nite to explain to others but she did not. It appears that she phoned HK to tell him to play a more positive role. As usual she fed me all

kinds of gossip about the inefficiency and confusion through the movmenet--I tld her in a nice way not to tell me this as I was not really interested--but that she should realize that this comes from the political confusion and false positions of the movement
After the PC meeting on Thursday Dennis appraoched me to have a discussion. He told me that he had changed his view on nationalism. He said notning along the lines that he appears to have told Gord--that I have betryed the struggle at the con vetuon--had given it up for the internat onal dispute or had suddenly switche d to a two nationalisms line. He told me that he doesn't think we answered JohnR seven points--the essence question which he admits that he was fater of.
Ddidn't say anything about me freezing him out of the writing of the joint UT statement--noe of these . I took advantage of the situation to te ll him about the line of the paper on the NDP and my disagreement with it.
The PC meeting kept me away from the informal meeting to discuss Dennis and Lydna's views. Gord was pleased with it though netiehr D. and L came not for that matter Harry K. Regula's contribution appears to have been good--hold in-keep a low profile, new elements have to develop some understanding of the problem before anything can come off.

The Sunday camp tU discussion came off well. Vern and Brian came out to see that all went well with their little talks. Both of them were obviaously out of it. Vern named the TU coordinating commttee--obviously a joke-persons largely with no trade union experience but safe. It had some impact on Vern--he conceded that he had been wrong--we needed all together meetings, the problem was that in the past we had not had a specific talk subject. Clfff rose to the situation--talked with Vic and Hugh about going into GY. Lynda D thought it good .Both Bob and Stue responded well. Unofrutnately I had to play a key role. Jim appears to have got into a heart to heart talk with Anne about problems of the movement. Anne ended up--what are we to do --we cannot go back to Ross who destroyed Vern and you(JM) I wonder what Vern and Anned now think--aXd Cliff told me that the ride down with me in his truck was a terrific experience for him politically--- in the course of that ride he told me tha that he had not understood what the talk and dispute on national ism was all about --althouhg it shluld be noted he played a vigorous role in the debate AT the ttime.

-30-

Vern Olson

July 19, 1973
Poundmaker

Toronto

Lynda Blackwood

Dear Lynda

It was good to receive delivery of your parcel of goodies. Charlie brought them right up before leaving today for the NDP convention. I was particularly glad to receive Our Generation . I have been looking forward to reading their article on The National Question in Canada. . I have just scanned through it to see how they deal with us for as perhaps you know Roussopoulos came to the headquarters for our material--I think he had a talk with John R to boot. Alas he(I gather from page 44)dismisses us --and gives honorable mention to thatspecial issue of Progressive Worker. I would assume we must have dissociated ourselves from Canada-US Relations. I wonder if we gave him Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism. Probably not or they would have taken advantage of it to do a job on us.

I gather the ISR with the rewrite of the 2 convetnion resolution has not come out yet.

just before they left

I manaed to scan the LC to talk to Charlie about the convention. It seems obvious to me that the front page is way off the beam--completely out of touch with the real situation in the country and in the NDP. You would gather that there was a braod left wing sentiment in the NDP waiting for the word---and that the NDP brass despite their latest re-win in Manitoba were on the skids in the eyes of many of the delegates and they were d sparately searching for the alternative. Alas for us --the task is --now with the defection of Waffle to pull elements of a left wing together on whatever basis we can. I havent had a chance to read the center spread but I see we c very clearly dissociated ourselves from any Canadian nationalist--anti-US takeover sentiment by reproducing the Macpherson cartoon. ..thereby marking ourslves off from any pro-Waffle sentiment that may reveal itself since this is the first convention since the attack on Waffle.

I am glad also that you mentioned the atmosphere that exists there with regards to us Camp Poundmakerites. Just before Jim and the gang went up to the city I had a talk to Jim about it. Our staff is quite demoralized --resentment about the operations handling of the camp--their not sneding the promised staff and their cutting everything back for the weekendsthat have been slated. I must say their concentrated concept is not working--- the women's liberation weekend was very poorly attended by Toronto. If you take away the excellent attendance from Montreal and Ottawa--and I gather the six or so people from around the coalition that Liz told me were there, the attendencae was quite low--and of tourse the main fault was Toronto. I gather that Lynda who plays a big role in the operation is giving us notice that if a fourth person does not come out she is quitting. Jim seems to be up and down--of course without a team things are limited to just general upkeep--no real projects are being taken on like the fireplace, the front porch or the balcony on the lodge etc etc. I have tried to tell him that the failures of the operation with regards to the camp are only a reflection of the general situation--the failure with regards to cleaning

up the headquarters(he tells me that Brian despite all his seriousness about the headquarters has been compelled to let the headquarters deteriorate--- apparently he has rented all the equipment on two ocassions and on neither did any team turn up to take on the work so the equipments was returned paid for of course but unumed.

"ith your information on hand--with regards to all the small talk I suggested that he act if firmly quite cooly for I do not think that they have dropped the camp but if they riled they could easily do so. I know that they think that this along with the press and the theoretical journal is a Dowson folley---not to speak of unconditional but critical support of the NDP

Inicdently did I tell you--Phil in a conversation with me here about the women(s ministry mentioned in passing that this was unfinished business of the last convention--I gather they are going to cast aside the 1971 document with my name on it at the December plenum. I understand that Cynthia Flood has raised the whole matter of taking the women's ministry into the Political Committee

I do not understand what you mean by our taking a turn in our abortion work.--to build a broad defence committee to defend Morgentaler(men and women committee) Isn't that just what the Canadians for Aobrtion Law Kepeal would be doing. Are we not going to take our seats in that CARAL body. What are we trying to do ? Move over to their position and try to carry it off better ! I was somewhat supriséd to read the statement that went out to the branch organizers on CARAL. ..particularly the line "We are clearly opposed to the formation of such a group." What does that mean The group is a fact-so the question is-what is your orientation to it. That sentence can only mean that we are frontally opposed to it which is not incidnetally the way the report came throuhg at the PC meeting. That line permeates the report--the talk about "it is important that we challenge Caral to support and build actions like the Tribunal" when it seems to me that the Tribu al 's success is up for question unless Morgentaler goes along with it. The simple truth is that CARAL has rendered the Canadian Women's Coalition redundent as reveal is the mass action opportunity. That is unless for some reason hard to grasp,and not at all likely,CARAL collapses. Inicidnetly Jim thinks this development is just fine --we can now turn the TWC into a xxxx-consciousness raising operation along the line of Velvet Fist and what was the name of the operation that Pat accused us of destroying ! Charlie volunttered his opposition to that communique and told me that he was going to send in a counter contribution but when I asked him last night before he went off to Vancouver he told me that he did not have a time. Cliff was out here and he and I had about an hours talk about this development in the process of which I praised your document and analysis of the spring conference--he opened the door for this with some ocmments about Vern O's contribution to the discussion in your branch. I gather Vemnttalked about our having to identify with CARAL. Yes, I dont understand what you mean

Suprised to hear about Wendy's transfer. I had the impression she was consistantly looming bigger in the Toronto operation.--the paper layout, women's liberation.

So what did the folks tell you about the weekend. Yes, Liz is hot. I came to the first class. Wendy unet though the standard talk on the family. It was generally compteent but without ingenuity. I gather some of the TWC contacts thought it was old hat. I made a short contribution. Wendy had posed the question as to the meaning of Engel's approach to the family. No one took it up but several without knowing it attacked it. I pointed out that Engels view revealed to women who are radicalizing the source of their oppressiin--that it was not some men or men in general but

Cliff #?

class society--today capitalist society. Strange to say Joe Y shorlty after talked about men as the oppressor sex--I sent a note to Wendy that she had to take this one frontally. Grace in passing identifed herself with Every other a willing Mother---- I forget what else I said but I clearly took on the ultra leftist tendencies that Penny and other expressed. Of course I do not hang around much up at the lodge and unknown to mee they made changes in the program. They had no lecture on the holidya Monday at all and held one the evenin folloing WendYRs afternnon talk. I missed it. I just missed the talk on SundayO-I did not think they would have it so early in the mornig. I got there jmatmas the lecture by Penny was just ending . The staff was resting just outside the cabin so I stopped an talked to them--then we moved over to the sundial table. Very coldly Liz came over and demanded that we clear out as themore of the discussion groups was wanting to us the table. Very icy, impolite

Did you read the latest Esquire---I thought there were three worthwhile articles on women's liberation.

Thanks for the Raffle material. I havent had a chance to really go tough it yet. But Laxer got a good coverage in the Star

I may well be in Toronto this coming weekend. ~~xxxxx~~ I am gearing my trip in to the Toronto public library's success in obtaining me the micro-film of the Workers in the tenwties. It was not in as of last Friday but he expects it is late this week. So I may well be in Friday or if there is a PC meeting on Thursday. When I come in it will be for a several days--the time necessary to go through the microfilm.

comradely

Ross

I hear Harry K is slugging meat at Can da Packers, that Wayne has dumped his motorcycle for a van and is coming out here any day . Zane came all the way out here to pick up his stuff but didn't come up to see me. And hows is ~~xxxx~~ Abie ?

July 30, 1973
Poundmaker

John R

Dear John;

Yes, as Phil told you I have not intended to go to the Oberlin convention

I am suprised that you raise the matter of the LT Tendency and suggest that I would strengthen the Canadian delegation by attending its meeting right after the convention.

Last Spring I think quite correctly I did not add my name to the list of endorsers of the United Tendency. I think that we agreed that my being a supporter of the United Tendency which your tendency characterized as supporting Canadian bourgeois nationalism (reaffirmed by Comrade Young at the convention) would of necessity cause the Leninist-Trotskyist tendency to take a position on the United Tendency.

Of course the United Tendency no longer exists. But the question upon which it was formed does and I am far from having changed or even modified my views. Thus my participation it ~~XXXXXX~~seems to me is a matter of continued concern. to the forces united in the LT tendency

There is also another matter of considerable concern to me--the document which I wrote with the agreement of the leadership at the time back in 1970 as a contribution to the discussion on entrism in the world movement. I am unaware of any other contribution, and the view of the LT tendency of this document. You will recall that in my last conversation with yourself and Phil I brought to your attention Comrade Fidler's comments in his summary reply to the Revolutionary Communist Tendency'sattack on our NDP orientation. Comrade Fidler dissociated himself from what he called Dowson's concept of critical but unconditional support by the LSA/LSO of the NDP. I told you that I considered this an attack on our strategic orientation to the NDP and that it was being implemented in the pages of Labor Challenge. As I understand from the few words we exchanged you agree with comrade Fidler's comments, and with the handling of the NDP in recent issues of Labour Challenge.

I do not know where the comrades of the Leninist-Trotskyist tendency stand on this contribution of the LSA/LSO-though submitted in my name. I would gather that you comrades would prefer that it slide into oblivion and are prepared to dissociate yourselves from it. I do not agree.

I therefore do not see how I strengthen our delegation--quite the contrary. I have therefore decided not to attend

I am somewhat at a loss to know how we together can work out a reply to Kandel's attack on the Canadian section that you would consider meets your needs. However I am looking forward to discussing this matter with you.

comradely

Ross Dowson

July 31, 1973

D

Dear Gord;

I suppose you heard that the modest ly attended trade union weekend proved useful. The attendanc was small and the operation attempted to establish its authority over it. Both Vern and Brain came out all prepared to give leadership with a couple of talks. Both talks were completely out of touch with what the really involved unionists wanted to talk about and fell by the wayside. McCarthy and Shue came. Bob's participation in the informal discussion first day was quite bad, petty factionalism--but his contribution in the second session, which Vern tried to lead, was very good. It was apparent that there were many important matters -particularly practical problems of working in the union movement that needed to be discussed.

I gathered from some c mments by Vern that the operation had concluded that we did no want general gatherings of our trade union activists but that a select committee was intending to establish its authority, calling in comrades from time to time to get a report from them, and direct their actions in the next period. Vern named the committee--its personal. It was absurd--not one of the activists at this gathering is on it and only two of the committee-Vern and Brian-came here. The committee was transparently irrelevant. Vern openly conceded that there was a need for general meetings of the trade unionists and that the problem had probably been that ~~they xxxxxxxxxx~~ xxxxx heretofore they had not worked out useful topics and known how to conduct the discussions.

The gathering and my discussion with Cliff Mack on the way down to the camp had a big impact on him. He had carried the line on Canadian nationalism but admitted to me that he now realized that he did not understand what the discussion had been all about. He was quite embaradsed when I kidded him about his attack on Hugh xxxxxxxxxx being petty bourgeois in a branch meeting a while back. At the end of the discussions he went down to see Vic H about getting into Goodyear--he has a serious long range outlook to our trade union work.

Jane Edwards came up to the cabin here a couple of times to talk things over. It is hard to get ~~xxxxxx~~ out of her but she thinks that the Canadian Womens Coalition has become a comfortable little spot for some of our comrades and, I would gather, thinks that we should take the seats that Pelrine and Morgenthaler have left open to us in CARRAL. He had an informal little talk about our NDP line but I am not sure what she understands

John Darling dropped in --his usual enthusiastic self but he didn't even stop to have a talk. He came and went on his way to Montreal to pick up his and John R'S furniture, I would gather that he is going to stay in Toronto for sometime. John's level of activity in the movement is subject to incredible variation. For periods he is super active. Up until recently he was the key activist in Montreal--running the bookstore typing up all the copy for Liberation and doing the layout. It is possible that he is in one of his slumps. But it would be very valuable to have some discusions with him right now about the situation in Montreal and problems of Quebec nationalism. There have been some big problems but I am not privy to them. For several months prior to the convention John R, Phil and Art were spending weeke after week there. These problems were never discussed on the PC. The changes--the dropping of the action program, the withdrawal and replacement of the whole first part of the document on Quebec, were never seriously motivated and of course not written up. So the movement missed a big educational experience which it will probably pay for later. Yes, it would be good to have some talks with John D on Quebec. Invite him over.

xhxmxmxmxmdmthxmxmxmxmxbxmd many interesting things in your letter. I dont know what pressure Lynda is under from the leadership to lead. Ixmxmxdxinmxginxmx mxmxmxmxmxm Lynda herself wants to be a leader. But in the minds of the rest of the comrades-particularly the women comrades I would imagine Lynda has little credibility--particularly after she withdrew twodocuments at very important points of debate . I think her reversal on Canadian nationalism which she is no doubt making known will also do little to heighten their respect for her. This question was by no means resolved in the minds of many comrades by the convention and I would think that life has continued to unresolve it. Hansen's attempt at the convention to replace the concept of a new nationalism with the concept of populism (a populism that is expressed not on a regional basis but betweeen two nations) which seems quite novel to me) didn't strengthen the oppossition to our view.

I have just recently studied the last two issues of LC. Dennis has an article in Number 32-Break from the Cold War Policy in which he has Canada as a "partner in U.S. genocide" Gerry had to declare the new Pentagon Papers revelations in the next issue and showed inadvertently how ludicrous this is.

It was good that Regula attended the gathering. I think that her concept of super-activism as being the problem reflects her own problem more than the general. As you know I really put the heat on her to go on staff ,which she did finally, only to pull out later. It was she who presented to me a super activist concept of organizer. She carried the line that she could not have a personal life with Nick and be organizer, or have a child etc etdc xxxx

This was also hidden by the need to come to grips with the leadership problem--their at long last expressed intention to rally to the challenge and my desire that they do so and unwillingness to appear to stand in anyway in the way. That of course was the overiding question that prevented us as a collective from having the comradely and educational discussion that was really necessary to come to grips with this new phenomena Canadian nationalism. They felliinto the trap of using this to establish that there was now-finally arrived-a new leadership--but one that had to break from the past--instead of being a continuity.

When I next come in we should discuss this idea of Wayne's that we have discussions amongst ourselves within the next several weeks. Right after Oberlin we should raise the matter of reopening the debate on nationalism--it would then seem quite logical that we should meet. Otherwise our coming together should have the utmost appearance of informality and casualness. I am sure that the unease in the movement has by no means lessened but has probably increased.

Lots more to say but if I close off now I will just manage to get this into the mail box for pick up. The postman comes anytime within the next half hour.

warmest regards

Ross

Wednesday around August 1st 1973
Camp Foundmaker

Dear Dale;

Ron tells me that you have been saddled with a considerable debt through the unsatisfied judgements claim arising from that car accident incurred through your good will.

That's bad

But even worse--he thinks that this fact has cuased you to decide that you must work in Canada Packers for the next period as a crash project to clear off this debt and so will be unable to go to York this coming year.

I gather that you think that it is more valueable at this time, politically, to go back to York than attempt to play a role in the food Workers local at Canada Packers--but that you think it is above all necessary at this time to clear yourself of this debt. If this is so I would like to venture an opinion.

I would not worry about this debt or concern myself about paying it off--but would proceed to return to York. If that debt should become known and used to block you from obtaining a student loan so that you could continue your studies I would fight it. It would be a good civil rights case. Such an accident could happen to anyone--and the unsatisfied judgements claim fund is recognition of this and a form of social insurance so that a person suffering a loss is not out on a limb because of the fact that the person formally responsible (in law) is unable through no fault of their own to pay for it. The concept of this fund is the same as non-contributory health insurance and its use to block you from continuing your education would be a positive scandal. I do not think that the officials would dare press payment in such as way as to result in your being deprived of (in their eyes) your sacred right to be educated.

In fact I would gaserally follow a course of non-payment of that judgement. Even thoughshould they press it your first line of action in my opinion would be to make the most pitiful token payment from time to time so that they cannot claim you are not making an effort ro that you do not recognize the court's judgement.

Sooner or later in my opinion we should refuse to pay off educational loans and all such things. After all everyone has a right to an education and its should be available not only up to but including university. Maybe you should be the sooner and not the later.

If you are not much convinced by this note--and even if you are--why not phone up Harry K at 781-2633. Without too much trouble he would tell you what has happened to various cases in the courts.

comradely

Ross Dowson.

Incidently I met Ray on the subway when I was last in town. He told me that he is in Waffle Misc and working with some York students who are in it and consider themselves Leninists. Wayne has met some of them and a day or so before I met one with Wayne He was a rather good type in my opinion. There had been a Waffle MISC conference at Woodstock a week before. As you know this is a very important development. Ray was not very articulate. Hope you can follow this up. Some of the former UT comrades not together a couple of weeks ago o. See you were not there. phone Gord

Thursday August 9, 1973
Poundmaker

To the Political Committee

I am addressing this note concerning Poundmaker to you, for whiâh the camp is based on the Toronto operations it is the concern of the movement as a whole--particularly Montreal, Ottawa, St Kitts and Kitchener-Waterloo.

I ~~was~~ was informed yesterday by comrades Mitchell and Dohoo that the August edac ational weekend has been cancelled by the Toronto Metro Executive Committee via a phone call from comrade Cushman. This comes as a complete suprise to me for only several days earlier comrade Courneyeur upon a telephone enquiry was assured by comrade Mitchell that everything was moving along towards a big and successful weekend centered around several lectures by myself. The cancellation is of course a suprise and inconvenience to me however this is not the cause of this note.

The cancellation of this weekend is the latest and most massive blow to this summer's unilisation of the camp as a league institution and in my opinion is in danger of being considered ~~[illegible]~~ an arrogant and contemptuous blow to the two comrades who put themselves at the disposal of the league for the entire summer to make the camp operation a successful league activity.

When these comrades took on the assignment thi LEague committed itself to a certain minimum of activites with regards to the camp. These commitments have not been met for various reasons and made this August weekend take on even greater importance. As you knor the movement failed to supply any supplementary work force as had been promised, which is necessary to improve thé facilities of the camp and make full utilization of comrade Mitchell's many skills, not to mention its making possible a useful continuing educational project.

This action on top of others constitutes a grave breach in the league's relations with these comrades, imperils the camps operation this year and puts a serious question mark around their involvement and for that matter anyone elses' involvement next year

Without knowing the exact details it is quite certain that it has placed the financial structure of this years operation in grave jeopardy. It will no doubt be necessary to actually subsuduze the camp, even heavily although with a minimum effort it could have been a source of income.

It is necessary that those in responsible positions intervene in this situation immediately--that they come out to discuss with comrades Mitchell and Dochoo, that they show a proper appreciation of teir effrots and attempt to pull the camp operation out of the crisis that this situation has now thrown it.

comradely

Ross Dowson

See postscript

Postscript to letter Aug 9/73

I had just finished the attached note so that when the comrades going into town to shopfor bricks for the fireplace and paint for the lodge could post it. To my suprise comrades Mitchell and Doohoo arrived in the car firmly committed and packed to leave the camp. Yes, they have packed up and left the camp. It does not seem possible that their mindscan be changed. So we have a new situation. It is possible that several comrades are headed to the camp for this weekend. I will attempt to handle the situation. However it is obvious that I am having to close and lock up the camp until you can work out some other solution.

It would appear that comrade Doohoo is off to visit some friends in the States and that comrade Mitchell is going to his apartment in Toronto. They have left the books in my care to be turned over to whoever you assign to the camp. I understand that there is a labor Day weekend being planned. Arrangements will have to be made quickly. I will attempt to be in the lodge act answer any phone call between 6 and 7

RD

August 14, 1973
Poundmaker

Toronto
Zane Boyd

Dear Zane;

It was good to receive your note of the ~~kkkkkkk~~ first. I was looking forward to seeing you last weekend but then life intervened. Hence this note.

I would suppose that Jim and Lynda got in touch with you or you with them. A real blow-out. Jim said his worst (to Anna Cushman) before I even eard about it from him. When Anna phoned him the message of the weekend cancellation he just sounded off all his grievnaces. Apparently he even told Anna that he would screww the League out of its 334 headquarters through his personal connections with Mrs Modlich. The whole flood burst loose. It is obvious that he and Lynda had only been holding on ever since ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ Lydna threatened to go on strike and Jim was going to go in and settel accounts over their failure to provide any staff.

c I hoped that I had managed to c ol things. I worked up at the loedge the next three days, as Bill Martin was there and at loose ends. Thursday nite, I guess it was, Jim and Lynda after talking about taking several days off came up and told me that they were going down to town to stay over nite at a motel and would be back that next noon. I knew Jim was still in a big stew but we talked about the next projects. All the plans were made to go in and buy some supplies to paintand stain the beams in the lodge, finish up the sheeting, and get bricks for the fire place. The care drove up to Lois' cabin presumably to pick me up and take them in with them. I looked out and insteado of having Bill in it it was jammed to the roof---with all their personal effects. Shorlty after I had left the lodge Jim and Lynda must have made a sudden switch and busied themselves with cleaning up everything they had here and packing it i into their car. Bill M never said a word to me about this ongoing flurry.

At anyrate Jim strode in to see me, carrying the books, face grim, mind closed--all firmly made up--not to listen to anything I might say . They planked down the books with a few covering words and pulled out. Jim phoned the next noon--Bill talked to him--probably to tell us that he was in town.

At one point in telling me how he told Anna his opinion of the whole situation he said he was through with the league--or perhaps that the league was through and he was through in this sense. Jim was looking forward to your visit here last weekend. He enjoys talking to you. I think it would be very valueable if you havent already done so to go down and spend an evening with him. You must stop him from leaving the league. The way haead is not yet clear and nothing at all is gained by pursuing that course. Quite the contrary. It just plays into their handw. Look what they have done to Steve Harding since he walked out--even though he later changed his mind under my pressure. They are prepared to tolerate membership of the old guard on the barest minimum basis. It costs nothing politically to contin ue on in the league but a few measely dollars. I tried last week to carry this same line with John Wilson who it would be worth while your spedning an evening with. Alas he is totally alienated on a personal basis and I am not sure what effect I had.

Things are moving to a climax in a factional struggle in the international and not, unfortunately, on the immediate issues of the Canadian revolution--Canadian nationalism, orientation to the mass political expression of the class-the NDP etc. In this situation we are gnerally with this machine operation but it seems clear to me that this continues their process of degeneration as a factor in the coming Canadian revolution. It appears that Claire noted the "continentalization " of the league

at that last friedns of the United tendency discussion. A shrewed observation. It seems apparent to me that the LSA-LSO is going to increasingly become part of the SWP, follow more and more closely, trnaslating mechanically its activities etc and more and more routinist as far as Canadian politics are concerned--you might say -sectarian.

Everyone is going to come back from Oberlin all hopped up for the international struggle. We are going to be given a sort of circus--which will take our minds off of nitty gritty problems of the Canadian revolution. I suppose you know that the SWP has decalred itself a faction--or the need for the Lenin-Tortsky tendency to become such. Here we have the RCT and the Revolutionary Marxist Group. I can see where all the discussions in the league are going to be direct--and all its energies too as we have the only French speaking persons in the Lenin-Trotsky tendency.

So we are going to have to hold on.

I am glad to note that you think that you are effectively moving towards resolving some of the personal problems. I have very good impressions of Marilyn which I hope carry over to Gwen. Above all I am glad to read of your decision to get a job and get off welfare--and not go back to school. Yes, routine, money, self estime. None of those go with going to university.

I would suppose from reading the last issue of LAc that everyone is elated with our work at the NDP convention. However it seems to me that we did harm to our long range orientation to the NDP--and in fact played into Lewis's hand , only serving to islate us in thevlong rangestruggle to build a braod left that can settle accounts really settle accounts with the reformist leadership of the class. In his notes of a publicist Lenin ridiculed the Italian Communists for satisfying themselves with always saying A plus to Serrati's A. Liz's attack on Lewis for supporting the Liberals is absurd as is Maurice's attack on the police budget--not their fault of course--it is the line of LC.

affectionately

Ross Dowson

August 14, 1973
Poundmaker

M
Toronto

Dear Jim;

On Sunday nite just after Vic H left a US comrade who you made a big impression on dropped into the camp--a Bob Bresnahan of Clevelenad--formerly Boston. He and companion are staying over using the far far cabin as a stepping off point for many side jaunts. . They are coming up for supper tonight . They may drop in on you on the way back to Cleveland.

I assume Bill M gave you the corked bottle opener. I opened the pracel as it came fro a hardware store second class and I thought it would have to do with the camp. Leave the mail arrangment with the camp as standing and I will re-address any mail that come to you personally. Incidnetlly I hope you gave Bill M the address of the locksmith who was getting a key for the freezer.

1) Jim and Lynda---do not give up your membership in the league--but retain it at least on a token basis. The operators are obviously prepared to accept membership on that basis--Zane writes that he has attended only one branch meeting in 8 weeks--imagine. As you estimate the next immediate period is going to be one of circusses--until the international showdown. We have to wait until it blows over.

2) All the recent new pressures(we will be supplying the only effective French speakers in the international struggle) and the recent experiences with the camp will only serve to continse these operators that the camp is move a milstone--another of Dowson's follies--than the asset that it obviously can and will be. They will move more in the direction of dumping it. There is none--two-big problems---Hugh's and Bedard's investment, and Dowson's formal ownership. Needless to say I am going to protect this operation. As I mentioned before it would be good if you owned a lot. I am prepared to switch Murray's lot to you. Probably later we could switch it to Myers.

Would it be possible for you to make a downpayment on ~~that~~ on one lot ? Say about 250 bucks at this time---take a loan.

And what about Hans M? I hear he is considering buying. Why doesn't he buy the last lot. Could you talk him into it. Very beautiful--right below Lois'. There is no question in my mind that these are good buys. All the more that the Hugh's are exapding the community down river. We may have the caretaker we want there too. You know the possiblity is posed of my offering to buy the LSA out of its 8 or so acres. and lodge. I think this is all going to come up and it would be good for you to butress your alreay investment by buying a lot.

comradely

Ross Dowson

Thurs Sept 6/73

Dear Lou (D.)

Jim tells me that the glue for the fireplace is larger than the bricks we purchased > That it is constructed so that you cut out a piece of steel depending on how you want to place the tile + Therefore he claims our glue is too small + we will have problems with the draft - that we will have to tear out your + my last mornings work + get bigger tiles + I am not convinced but we should check it out with that outfit in Nagaree where we'll have to buy the xtra bricks + or check out with the fabricators at Tweed + So - can we go out Friday - we should consider that

why not phone me just before
at 762-4101

We will also need a bag of cement.
So I would like to talk to you
before the Jarrow weekend

I dont have your phone -
Perhaps you can give it to
Art + I could try to contact you

I put the polyethelene on the stones
ready beautiful for we did
so far

Fa bornall

Ros

Hope you are rested up

So Mayfield
Bloor & Jane.

September 16, 1973

Looking back at the meeting that agreed to move towards the formation of a teddency. It was apparent that all the comrades there but perhaps Ford, Harry, Zane are out of tough with the movement and politics generally--you might say that they have practically left the movement. They dont read the press, go to the forums or participate on any level of it--add Gus to the above list--and of course Regual and Hans were not there. They are all with a fairly lengthy record in the movement but none of them have worked full time for the movement except for John D , possibly Pat S and Regula(unfortunately she did not measure up to it) They are cadre and leaders but unfortunately no longer see themselves in that capacity and are adjusting their personal lives away from full time commitment to the movement
They are all aware of the profound degeneration of the movement, the decay of the leadership. Pat S dismiised the leadership as in reality being petit bourgeois radicals who couldnfunction as workers, who are disorganized and in many ways incompetent, without any real experience in life. Claire did not undestand Pat, thought that here comments presaged some kind of personal attack on the individual leaders and protest with the question--who here is prepared to go on staff of the movement. One could not help but feel the poignanacy of this question. That , along with the challenge that I made--that I was prepared to move out alone if necessary and my stated unconcern what the membership thinks --which clearly suggested that not only the heads of the operation were largely irrelevant but almost everyone else attached to them too--must have profoundly shook the meeting.
When I talked of the sectarian degeneration of the movement that it was rapidly deteriroating into norhing but a sect neither Pat S nor Jim C seemed to be at all claear on this--That the movment was adapting to ultra left pressures on it etc., caused Pat to express her disagreement--she said she does not think they are adapting to ultra left and I would gather thinks that there is an organization problem..she even suggested that she did not belong here if we thought they were adapting to ultra left pressures and if I am not mistaken expressed opinions that she was really in substantial agreement with the RCT. What we need are educationals amongst curselves. Astonishingly, according to my notes Zane doesn't see the leadership has having a line but sees an organizational problem---they have an artifical concept of Cannonism, trying to exercise a type of discipline and authority without having the basis for it
I would say that the general concensus was that we do not have the basis for a tendency but that we wish to start an educational process
Jim and Harry expressd the view that in reality we need a faction--that the leadership had to be replaced. Jim came through very strong whereas Harry appeared contradictory

My first opinion was that time is running out--that the movement is not only degenerating but disintegrating. It appeared that Winnipeg was trying to provoke us into action that would allow them to break with great fanfare on the eve of the ~~Rxxxxxxxxx~~ founding of the Revolutionary Marxist Group...and that we should delay until that event. But subsequent information suggested that the RMG rally would not be breaking as a tendency then (probably Winnipeg would go ahead and set up an RMG group) but would go through to the orld Congress which appears to be going ahead on the December schedule. In that case I suggested that we should move now to the formation of a tendency however I pulled back f from this in the light of the discussion and my evaluation of the personell and went along with the idea that we should move towards a tendency and ~~xxxx~~ it was possible after several discussions that we would disband
Where are we at.
Their assault on our Strategic orientation to the NDP requires us to act. They are already lining up everyone through the press and in a persistant incessant attack on the slogan Win the NDP to Socialism and the concept of uncondtional but critical support of the NDP should we wait until they officially open the discussion while in the meantime they rapidly establish the line up of the ranks. If this struggle is lost in my opinion our fate will be sealed. We will have to go through these two or three discussions and see where everyone stands. The failure of the LSA to grasp the progressive essence of Canadian nationalism rendered us , pushed us outside of and out of touch with the radicalization and the NDP line would it seems to me settle the matter.

We need along with the educational discussion on the NDP oritnetation to have a further exchange of views on where the movement is at. The ~~fnrxx~~ NDP discussion will help resolve this but not entirely. It was good that Claire raised the challenge of them going on staff--that poses the challenge in a hard frank way. My decision not to take the Cdn nationalism discussion to the wall and my pushing Denis and Gord to give the major contributions was correct--although it would appear to have unnerved the United Tendency and affirmed the leadership's gossip that Dowson is senile, has degenerated. With the 70 convention I have moved more and more to take a back seat. Are the ex supporters of the UT contemplating that I will once again move to the front seat---at the age of 56 years ? Harry talks about raising funds to put me on a payroll--Claire sees me going on staff again shorlty--I gather with the current operation merely shaken up somewhat. This is a key question. Claire Harry see my return--giving the struggle a very personal character. It is important that they understand the total impersonal and completely political character of this struggle and that we cannot go home again either--that others have to move out.

We have had our first casúality---Zane has once again decided that he must quit. Jim and then I gave him the shots. I took the máiling list off him so that we will feel no press ure other than political responsibility. Jim let me know that he dimisses most of the ex UT--Pat with all her problems is key in his mind --and he himself has so many problems.

One might conclude that there is with the collapse of this leadership no practical alter native and that at best we will end up with a historic redodr--having proven ~~a~~incapable of pulling together even the nucleus of a cadre

xxxx

It would appear obvious at this time that there can be no sucessful struggle for the leadership unless the present leadership breaks down--not likely now with its internation al mission. That if we form a tendency it has to have a very low profile-in a situation where the current operators will be absolutely intolerant of such a situation. The way ahead is murky indeed.

ON THE QUESTION OF "CANADIAN UNIONS"

Contribution by Ross Dowson from an LSA Internal Bulletin, 1973 Series

(Notation by R.D.: *"Suddenly appears in plenum folio – not distributed till then"*)

In the July 23, 1973 issue of Labor Challenge there appeared as a lead, an editorial entitled "Canadian Unions?" While a question mark was placed after the words Canadian Unions, the editorial had a clear line of opposition to Canadian unions as counterposed to the so-called International unions, called elsewhere in the editorial, American-based unions, that is, unions under the domination of the US trade union bureaucracy whose, in many cases hand-picked appointees are dominant in the top circles of the Canadian Labor Congress.

On the surface this editorial would appear to be nothing more than an application of an aspect of our 1968 document "The Power and Dilemma of the Trade Unions." Apparently in line with the 1968 document, the edit says "For or against Canadian unionism is not a matter of principle for socialists and militant unionists." However it does not state, as does the 1968 document, that it is a tactical question.

The editorial enunciates some principles — the right to belong to a union of ones choice — unions must be free from interference and tampering by the government. Interestingly enough it is just these principles that most of the advocates of Canadian unionism, both autonomists and separatists, most strongly identify with. On the latter principle they advocate freedom from interference by not only the Canadian, but the US government. The US trade union bureaucracy has accepted Nixon's wage freeze, and its present continental contracts impose this freeze on its Canadian affiliates (in the case of the Douglas UAW workers by forcing them back to work through its control of the strike funds.)

The choice of tactics is determined by the concrete, the current situation: intermediate factors, not broad programmatic questions upon which we all agree, dictate the choice of tactics best suited to advance the revolutionary movement at a given conjuncture.

One of the factors that determined our reservations with regards to Canadian unionism, that determined our tactic, was our estimation of the forces that were then, in 1968, talking in terms of and promoting Canadian unions. We were of the opinion that they were essentially conservative and opportunist elements looking to build little bailiwicks of their own.

Considerable water has flowed down the St. Lawrence since 1968. In our opinion it is no longer possible to say as we did then that those supporting and promoting Canadian unionism are essentially conservative elements — and not militants. It is in partial recognition of this change, we take it, that the edit states that the question has now

“become a major concern for many NDP and trade union militants?”

The changed situation should cause us immediately to open up discussion on this matter through the League. Such a discussion should be free of characterizing the moves towards Canadian national unions as “raids,” as does the CLC and the LC editorial. That is what they called the moves to build the CIO unions. In particular the discussion should serve to acquaint our movement with the great many recent developments in this area, not covered by our press: the defection of sections of the distillery workers, the Quebec CNTU’s identification with CUGE, etc., etc. We will have to come to grips with such predictions as D.N. Secord, president of the 21,000 member CBRT, recently made — that the CLC leadership and the heads of its US-based affiliates are fighting a losing battle in efforts to delay the inevitable, an independent Canadian labor movement in maybe 10 years.

We may well conclude that the forces gathering behind this struggle will achieve what is the “real challenge” according to the editorial — the organization of the unorganized, that we are perhaps about to witness a new turn comparable to the break from the AFL and the rise of the CIO.

Ross Dowson
September 17, 1973

Sept. 24/73

Dear Cynthia (F., Vancouver)

A hurried note to hear whatever you would like to say to me about the article on the Women`s Ministry that appeared in issue 85 of Labor Challenge.

In my naiveté with the publication of Liz Angus`article in a previous issue I thought the comrades were pulling back on this question.

However with the article under Jacquie`s name we got both barrels.

I had submitted a short statement calling for discussion on Canadian national unionism – probably you noted the edit several issues ago which while suggesting it is a tactical question took no account of the new situation since 1968 which would be uppermost in determining our tactic.

I have told them that I disagree with the Henderson article which came up before nobody whosoever, though they knew of my general opposition, and that I am making a submission.

I would like to get it in as soon as possible and so I am anxious to hear what you have to say on it just as soon as possible.

Ross Dowson, 82 Mayfield Ave., Toronto M6S 1K8 Ont.

October 1, 1973

Gary O'Brien
554 Gilmour Street Apt 2
Ottawa

Dear Sir;

I have received your note of September 23

You have chosen a very interesting subject for your thesis. As you can imagine I have already done some work in this area. I am looking forward to having some discussions with you on the matter. However at this time I am at loose ends, with my library and other important source materials somewhat scattered. I am looking for an apartment while living with friends and hope to be settled in in the next month. In the meantime there are several things of value that you should do.

Somewhile back I loaned (to the Toronto Reference Library) a complete file of the Vanguard which Spector launched shortly after his expulsion from the CP. It would seem to me that the Department of Labour would be interested in obtaining a copy of the microfilm they made of it, for their own library. Of course you would have to go through the microfilm that the Dept of Labour in Ottawa has of the Worker which Spector edited for a period. Obviously Rodney did this but in many ways he was not qualified to get all there is in it. This summer I got the Toronto reference library to borrow Ottawa's microfilm. I was able to put aside four days solid to work on this microfilm but did not even manage to finish the first year. I ended up reading almost every article and in reality only making a working index.

Spector also edited the Cdn CP's theoretical journal for a period. I have not come across a file but I see you know Bery Kenny and I would think that he would have a file. It would be good if you could arrange to have him let the Toronto Reference Library microfilm it. I have only a couple of copies.

I recently came in contact with Joseph Starobin at York. I think he mentioned you to me. He referred me to a review that he wrote in the Cdn Forum of the Rodney book. There are some interesting anecdotal comments in this review that show that he is in contact with someone who was active in the CP in the Spector period and is a person of some jugement. You should ask him. It might well be Joseph Salsberg. I think that it would be extremely valueable to have an interview with Salsberg who resides here in Toronto. I have every reason to think that he would be coperative and could refer you to the one or two other contempraries of Spector who would have something useful to say. I think you should move on this part right away as these persons are old and are leaving us. It would be good to have a couple of well organized interviews to start their memories working.

I see you have read the Rodney book. I think you must also read the two volumes that Theodore Draper has written on the US CP in this period and also

James P Cannon's book with Draper's commendatory introduction entitled I think the First 10 Years of the Communist Party. Probably you should acquaint youself with Coser and Howe's study of the US CP too. Read also History of American Trotskyism by Cannon and Max Shachtman's The First 10 yrs - history + principles of the Workers Party

I know of Freda Held--she was a social worker here in Toronto with whom Spector had a deep personal relationship. I have never contacted her and do not know if she is even alive. I have heard that she had Spector's books and papers but also that she destroyed them at the outbreak of the war. It would be worth while checking out

~~xmkmmmxmSpmmkmx~~ I met Spector a couple of times when he came up from the States to speak in Toronto for the Cdn Trotskyists and later, about 7 years ago I had a personal interview with him. CBC had a lengthy interview with him which was shown on TV--it was very interesting. Possibly you can locate this in Ottawa and see it.

I would think that there is a file of Imprecor (International Press Coresspondence published by the Executive Committee of the Communist International.) somewhere around. Spector worked for it in Europe for a period and probably wrote some articles for it. It was at this time that he learned of Trotsky's struggle.

My general impression is that Spector did not write a great deal but was primarily the leading spokesperson for the early CP--along with Jack MacDonald— and equally facinating person. I have never seen a book or pamphlet with his name on it. He wrote a valueable introduction to the first English edition of Trotsky's Lessons of October. I think you will find a few articles in the Fourth International or New International which he edited for a period after he went to the United States

Are you in contact with Rodney? He probably has some material of interest to you which he was unable to use in his project---and he would certainly be able to suggest some leads you could follow up.

I do not know how far you have got on this project but I hope that these few words will serve to widen your acquaintance with the theme you have chosen and keep you usefully occupied until I get settled in and we can arrange some discussions.

It is best to address any mail to me to

R. Dawson
82 ~~Mayfield~~ Ave
Toronto
Mayfield
M6S 1K8, Ont

Sincerely
R Dawson
Ross Dawson

I have never heard as brilliant an orator as Spector in the 30's

Check out the office of the Bookbenders Union in Ottawa. A leading person on their staff is Bert Groves who knew both Spector and MacDonald (the later exceptionally well). When you make contact you might say I mentioned him to you

LSA/LSO INTERNAL

I N F O R M A T I O N B U L L E T I N

Vol. 1, No. 1 | Oct. 1973

CONTENTS

1. Statement of Tendency Formation by the Labor Party Tendency p. 1

2. Statement of the Political Committee p. 2

3. Letter of Comrade R to Comrade Dowson of Sept. 20, 1973 p. 4

The material in this bulletin is published by the Political Committee for the information of members of the League for Socialist Action/ Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, Canadian section of the Fourth International.

STATEMENT OF A TENDENCY FORMATION IN THE LSA/LSO

Early last Fall and immediately prior to our spring convention our press expressed considerable confusion as to our orientation to the NDP, which the Mandel-Maitan-Frank faction took advantage of for their factional purpose.

In the convention itself the reporter of the Political Resolution in his summary remarks declared that the concept of unconditional but critical support by the Canadian Trotskyists of the mass labor party formation, the NDP, was not his view, and by implication not that of the majority of the leadership. In dissociating himself from this concept he specifically referred to the document "Our Orientation to the NDP – the Strategy and its Tactical Application" where it is developed at some length. This document, while submitted to the 1970 convention in the name of an individual, had the endorsement of the Political Committee.

Despite periodic protests by some leading comrades and without discussion on the Political Committee or in the Toronto branches, since the convention a whole series of important articles relevant to different aspects of the NDP and our work have been published in our press. Those articles show a clear trend towards a sectarian revision of our longstanding strategic orientation and in our opinion, in their totality, constitute an abandonment of our orientation to the mass labor party.

As the 1970 document points out, "Our CCF-NDP orientation" and its effective application has been the hardest fought position in the history of the movement, established against trends of centrist conciliationism and liquidationism into the NDP, sectarian opposition to the NDP, and in more recent years, spontaneist and adventurist hostility to it..." And further; "it (the CCF-NDP) is the touchstone of class politics. All working class politics revolve around it and an incorrect position on it is fatal."

It is in order to commence a process of an open and serious discussion within the movement and to defend the longstanding strategic orientation of our movement to the NDP that we declare the formation of the Labor Party Tendency.

October 4, 1973

(signed)

Gord D.	Jim C.
Ross D.	Jane C.
Harry K.	Dale R.
Zane B.	Claire D.
Jim M.	G.T.
H.M.	Lynda D.
Wayne R.	

October 11, 1973
82 Mayfield Ave
Toronto M6S IK8

Nic (H.S.)
Vancouver

Dear Nic;

Just a few lines to put you into the picture down here.

Enclosed is a statement of the formation of a tendency.

The comrades have been so appalled by the line of the paper on the NDP (among the articles--Jacquie's on the Women's ministry--that was not presented in any form to the PC although I expressed complete disagreement in the ~~formmhx~~ informal discussions) that we decided to get together to see what was to be done. We did not move outside the old United Tendency.

After a couple of discussions everyone agreed that we should reconstitute a tendency--on the NDP, the key strategic concept of the movement. It is at this time generally agrred that we are going to operate on a low key..that we are not by any means out to polarize things. We think that the existence of the tendency will help to stop the didipation of the leagues's forces. We are not too worried about the reaction of the leadership--the continuity of the movement's ideology is uppermost in our mind.

We are going to meet regularly for discussions. Wayne gave a valueable talk which we intend to edit and circulate in the tendency and those interested. The leadership has been going ahead hell bent on its revision without discussion in the movement here and now we will be holding our discussions--this will no doubt force the whole thing into the open--and possibly moderate their course.

to the PC(LTfraction)

About a month ago I submutted a one page statement in opposition to the edit of a few months ago rejecting Canadian unionism. I have also written an anlysis of the women's ministry article. The latter I will not be able to put in as is ---no sooner had I worked it out when I received some excellent material from Maurice and Cynthis which compells me to rewrite.

all the best

Ross

82 Mayfield Ave
Toronto M6S 1K8

Vancouver

Dear Cynthia and Maurice

Thanks very much for the wealth of information and your views that you have sent to me. I had already ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ roughed out a critique of Jacqie's article but now, this weekend I will rewrite it. I told the PC to expect such a contribution as soon as I read the article. I do not know ~~whether~~ I told you or not but I have already handed in a critique of their editorial ejecting the concept of Canadian national unionism. Unfortunately this is still sitting on the desk of the LT faction operat on in the PC. As you probably know up until yesterday Walter Davis of the RCT was still on the PC, making it very difficult to operate politically. This fact has justified the CO practically burying everything. I was thinking that we cannot let this curb us--but now the RCT may well be clearing out completely . On Monday I learned that Walter had sent in a statement of resignation from the PC and refusal to recognize its authority but I do not yet know the outcome of a meeting they were yet to have with him.

The whole first paragraph of your letter, Maurice , pulls together in a very precise form what a considerable number of the comrades in the old UT told me about the operation as they have seen it and Jaquie Henderson's role from a way back.

But my purpose in this note is really just to thank you for all the material and to send you a copy of a tendency statement. The names attached are of those who happened to be able to get together one evening last week. There will be more. We are not pressing anyone or trying to polarize the movement. At that last meeting Wayne Roberts presented a document on our orientation, taking up some of the arguments that the leadership has been spreading through the movement behind the backs of the movement. We will be editing it and puting it out for circualtion. The tendency will be meeting about once every ten days . The leadership has been working hard against the 1970 line both through the press and various educational projects I see it has been carrying in Montreal and Vancouver(from the minutes) So we will be doing our preparations. This will either inhibit them or force them to open it up gere in Toronto.

Will write you fuller after the weekend.

all the best

Ross Dowson

Glad to hear that the baby is such a big success

LPT #1

October 18, 1973
82 Mayfield Ave
Toronto 21, Ont.

New York

Dear Joe (Hansen, SWP)

I have been blocked from dropping you this note. I received your message on Sunday during our day long conference and prior to my taking on a new job, the next day. It is a tough job which not only explains my delaying in getting to the typewriter but als the wage that I am getting from what is really a cheap operation. I am managing a bookstore operation owned by the mighty Columbia Records(Canada) which is in a real crisis. Its few skilled staff are pulling out for better things and there is no system and its unskilled staff(paid the minumum wage) is of course completely unreliable. I am working a 10 hour day-5 days but this week has the yearly inventory .

Of course the ~~fmrmxhinxxfmtxx~~ Labor Party Tendency was formed with considerable trepidation. Upper most in our minds is the crisis in the FI and its direct reflection in Canada--the RCT. However the Can dian situation caused us to take the action.

Everyone it appears except the PC majority here knows that we have dumped our strategic orientation to the NDP. It told the comrades here early last summer and their response was that I should take on the task of tearing our press apart. The Cam dian Lambertists openly comment in their press to this effect and the RCT-RMG chortles over the fact as a partial victory in their fight against tailism. Almost every issue in my opinion testifies to this---the latest--our coverage of the expulsion of two comrades from the NDP. This was handled not from the point of view of defending ourselves as a legitimate element in the political radicalization of the Canadian workers expressed by the NDP and building up support for a protest, but we drew the fundamental principled line of demarkation between revolution--the LSA-FI and reformism-the NDP. I would think that our readership, whether they agreed or disagreed with our view would fail to understand why we should even concern ourselves with the NDP except to damn it.

However you must want to know where I see the tendency going. At the PC meeting where the tendency statement came up I ~~told~~ the comrades that it intended to maintain a low profile--that ~~it~~ we were by no means trying to press comrades to align themselves with us-- and that it anticipated that a discussion would be structured by the leadership.

But the response was sharp. Instead of a discussion, an exchange, it quickly degen erated into a series of debators points that scarecely covered threats. I think that it would be correct to say that the majority PC at that meeting declared the tendency to be illegal. It was said to be "blind", to be "a fraud", to "constitute a declaration of war against the leadership." Low profile was ridiculed-"if the tendency is at all serious, given the centrality of the question it will wage war to the knife ." A couple of comrades stressed that the PC ~~xxxxxxx~~ statement and addenda that unwrapped the tend ncy statement must challenge the right of the tendency to exist. Because the statement did not actually outline a platform (I assured the comrades ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ there would be subsequent documentation) one comrade ~~stressed~~ that until such time as what he would characterize a platform appeared there could be no meetings of the tendency.

Where do I see the tendency going ? I do not know where this leadership is going, and of course it is the stronger and most vigorous factor in the ~~xxxxx~~ process.

I am typing these last few lines after talking to you on the phone. As I said---I should go to see you--after all I am now another five years younger, according to my accepted application form. When we were discussing the date a few hours ago I did not

have my calendar pad handy. We agreed on the October 27-28 weekend. Nomew have the pad before me. My trouble is I just cant take business seriously that the operation I am working for takes that weekend very serious. Today the top brass agreed to my proposal to hold a gigantic escalating discount sale of books to clear out a lot of dead and dying stock. To their thinking they went overboard. I think the weekend is ok but it is at the peak of the sale which starts Wednesday . I will phone on the evening of the 27th to settle things.

warmest regards to you and Reba

Ross

October 23, 1973
82 Mayfield, Toronto

Vancouver

Dear Maurice;

I received your letter of the 18th last night when I got back here from work. I have been employed the last week at A & A Books--an absurd job which I am going to have to quit. I took the job knowing my hours and wages but not knowing that as manager of the bookstore I would be an employer of a work operation of some 12 persons who get the minimum wage and work 48 hours. Of course they can get people to work for those conditions but, as I have found out, they can't get any kind of operation. Saturday the shipper quit, yesterday the fellow who has been running the order desk told me he is quitting Friday---that takes us down to one person who has any knowledge of the operation at all--so of course we are not a bookstore but in reality a self service operation without any kind of stock control--purchasing--right on through. In such a situation the manager substitutes himself for everyone and is a slave or a BOSS.

But to get to the task.

Unfortunately I know nothing about what is going on in BC other than what I read in the bourgeois press. The PC, even though now it is cleared of the RCT, seldom discusses political questions of a general character --it has not done so for well over a year--even 2 years and the big pressure on it is the coming world congress.

Of course the women's ministry is not going to be discussed--they are waiting for my contribution. I would gather from the last issue of LC that we have not worked out a clear line on the BC labor law. Earlier articles made me uneasy--their constant nagging that the [illegible] SC laws be repealed even though by and large they seemed to me to [illegible] being not enforced--as if the NDP government was not preparing something. Now that the new regulations have come out, I am not at all sure as to what exactly we have to say. The bourgeois press here of course did not reproduce them and has so far contented itself with statements by various elements in the trade union movement. Perhaps the most interesting comment I came across was Stan Little's of CUPE. CUPE apparently struck off a special commission to study the regulations and they concluded that the laws were a big advance for labor--but of course there has to be some experience in life. It would be good to get the official CUPE statement. In this matter I would be cautious. The BC NDP is subject to all kinds of criticism from demagogues who often turn out to be nothing but disguised Liberal bourgeois opponents of the working class movement.

Even on the one point of criticism that LC brought forward--Ray Haynes--on the opt-out on religious grounds, when you read it closely in LC he is very restrained and cautious--in fact the headline BC Unionists fight govt threat to union shop is not sustained by it. Haynes expresses great concern, and then goes on to express opposition to any watering down of union shop provisions. . Johnson is more concrete, but then Haynes' comments right after [illegible] resort to the general again. When the so-called Rand formula was imposed by the courts on the Autoworkers there was much talk about it being a blow at the uion shop--we did not agree and in fact what it turned out to be was a face-saving device for Ford. It gave the UAW the dues checkoff and in effect a union shop without forcing the Ford bosses to admit that they had conceded it. There was no effective force of religious opponents that could turn it into an open shop tool and it ended up in destroying the base of what there was. Once a worker pays his dues puts his money there--he tends to put his mouth there too. In the case of Ford--the Rand formula led to the closed shop. In actuality—

and elsehwere so far across Canada it has had that effect. What is the score in BC at this juncture--will it result in the coalition of religious opponents into (workers) and become an anti-union device or will it dwarf whatever these forces amount to of their anti-union demagogy. XXX Nick will be able to tell you that quite easily.

Somewhile back when there were some actions reported in LC of labor protests against the NDP government and its inaction I recall cautioning the comrades--that we should be careful as serious militants about getting involved--that I was not at all sure that some of these elements were not being manipulated by the Liberals and anti-politicals. Phil, who was in direct contact with the situation attacked me--demagogically he tried to derail the discussion by attempting to make out that I was not defending my own comrade even. I fget the details but Nic suffered some kind of penalty and after all he was a UT supporter. I seem to recall that this incident involved some sectors of the building tades which I told them are permeated with business unionism of the worst type--including the Mafia. Right now the BC press is probably reporting on the enquiry that is being conducted by the Ontario government.

Some union leaders have characterized the BC labor laws as imposing compuslory arbitration. But I would like to hear more. My impression is the opposite. It would seem to have removed the courts from the xxxxx arena, which is our fundamental and basic line in--the court being one of the most important instrumvents of the bourgeois state apparatus. We are not opposed to arbitration in principle just as we are not opposed to union contracts and settlements determined by the present relation of class forces.

Over the past period, particularly since the NDP is in government in BC, Sask and Manitoba, our press has been prone to latch onto any and every criticism of the NDP. It would seem that in the mind of the editorial board and the PB with the NDP in office we are faced with a qualitatively new problem with regards to our orientation. This surfaced in the women's ministry discussion here--it would seem that once what we called a labor party and what we supported critically (to be sure) when not in office--once in office takes on a qualitatively new character. I gather it is not a labor partty administrating the bourgeois state, a labor government, but a bourgeois government undifferentiated from a Tory or Liberal government. Dick once said that we cannot support it in anyway, make demands on it etc. He pulled back when xxxxxxx I made the simple point that we make demands on Liberal-Tory governments

Of course it is easy to score all kinds of debating points against Barrett but my impression is that the NDP government has by no means compromised itself, that we are in for a big educational experience, that we have to make demands on it that are in this sense realistic. I am taking this up in my minstry contribution...the ministry demand and the differences in our movement are quite expressive of this problem. Andstein and Dent in their leaflet unfortunately are able to do a job on us

In view of my lack of specific information on what is going on in the BC NDP struggle I am unable to move off generalities. I do not know what you think but all my past experience tells me that Nick S really understands our orientation and knows how to work in this milieu. Even if for various personal reasons he is restricted at this time in his activity he must certainly be following developments. This letter comes late in the day but if I were in your position I would try to have some in depth discussions with Nick.

Yes, I would certainly take Chile into the BC Fed and into the NDP convention. I cannot visualize a serious defence campaign that would not base itself on the NDP and trade unions--particularly in BC where there appears to be considerable concern--after all isn't the NDP brass proising us a peaceful path to socialism ala Allende. It would seem that out there (as here) we mistakenly got started off with the RMG Lambertists etc in this field. We were very much aware of the problems this creates when we were building the anti-Vietnam xxxxxxx war movement. We did not move out until we got a galaxy of sponsors that assured its character and could absorb the ultras.

Through our press as the Labor Party Tendency clai ms we have abandoned our orientation to the NDP. XXXX It would be strange since our press guides the thinking of our comrades and contacts subject to the

our influence if this did not show up in our work. Well I think it was obvious that our strategy at the NDP federal convention, from Liz's opening attack on Lewis was completly wrong. Particularly in light of the absence--Waffle now outside---of any really viable left wing. I would gather that this lay behind the constant friction between Hans M and Dick Fidler during the convention. While sometimes not too articulate, not too clear, Hans is one of our really expeerienced NDP activists.

According to Lynda Blackwood now ~~NDP~~ West Toronto NDP co-ordinator , despite all the talk about the number of comrades who now have NDP cards, we are not really doing anything in the NDP--except for Liz Barclay's riding. Her observations so far in her new post are so negative that they really suprise me. The fact that Ged Doctrow remined on the plain of articles in our press and did not spell out a number of incidents in our Toronto NDP work that showed an abandonment of our strategic orientation was made much of by Gary recently I understand. This trend may find its real expression in life in increasing non-involvement in the NDP which could be further justified on a practical plane by the obvious absnece of any real number of viable left wingers in the party here. Wafflers ~~mmm~~ appear in large part to have sustained their membership but are completely out on the sidelines. There are big discussions going on in Waffle particularly now that the Sask elements have decided to move towards founding a new party and we will get a better picture from the new series of classes they will be opening soon.

A few last words before I tear myself away to work. I think that it is important thatbyou and Cynthia not let yourselves be provoked. As you can see from the sudden appearebace of an information bulletin the PC majority is trying to declare the tendency illegal. The statement is only a very very pale reflection of the atm osphere they generated on the PC with its serious of "musts" in the last two paragraphs of the October 12 statement.

It would seem that the PC majority is adpting a line --the fewer the better. They are not going to recruit Steve, it seems clear to me. and there is a general drive to clear off the books persons who at this time are not 100 per cent ,even though many of them are longstanding cadre of the movement. I think we should retain a low profile, an educational one, keep cool and not get provoked into ill considered statements and actions.

Comradely

Ross

October 26/73
Prinsep, Vancouver

Dear Dick:

It is a long time since I have written to you. Your last letter re the camp I turned over to Jim Mitchell. Over the past 2 summers he has organized work squads at the camp who have served as the base for the work crews on the educational weekends and have also considerably expanded the camp facilities. I was surprised when I enquired a month or so ago that he had not taken up your letter.

I do not know whether you are still tossing back and forth in your mind the idea of taking up a sort of caretakership of the camp. The lot owners and LSA reps have been planning a camp meeting for some while but since the lot owners work and are sometimes on shift – and in view of the problems in the FI – the meeting has not come off. I intend to raise the idea of a caretaker – all the more that Vic Hugh had expanded his lodge – as has Lois and as has the LSA/LSO its facilities. I am afraid of vandalism but so far (as of my last visit) there has been none. It would be good if you are still thinking this way that you write me as soon as possible. I think I told you that I feel positive that you could <u>not</u> get welfare in the Tyendinaga Township. I feel also that one would want a car – of course we would have to winterize more than we have right now. This fall Lou Donnelly and I put a big triangle wall stone fireplace in the main room – it is almost complete. About a day`s work to do.

It is good to hear you have a job. Of course it is hard to imagine that any of us would be able to get one outside of working for the movement that we would feel any affinity to.

I do not know whether you are aware – but I have gone off staff – as of Sept. 1/73. I went the rounds of the academic area – libraries etc. but it would seem that one either accepts about $1.80 an hour or has to have an MA in history or sociology. I am going to try to get a Canada Council Grant so I can write a history of the movement but in the meantime I managed to land a job at A & A. Books on Yonge. They told me my wage & hours – but not the wages & hours of the staff and that each department (meaning me in the books) hires and fires its staff. Imagine me – hiring persons at $1.85 an hour for a 48 (hour) work week. Well yesterday I told then no go – although they agreed to increase the rate (the Ont. Gov`t will probably be doing it next session). I am just staying on a short while for replacement. What a shit-house. Four of the staff have quit since I have been there – 3 of them constituting the only persons who happen to know anything of the operation. Really quite an impossible job. Of course I have no unemployment insurance. I would have liked to have had a job of this level ($165.00 a week) for the 26 weeks – but too bad.

I hope yours lasts to get you on unemployment insurance. Of course I would be most anxious to do anything you want me to do with regards to the Bank of Commerce

certificates. So I will expect to receive them in good time – late Nov. or early December as you suggest.

I am not surprised that NDP constituency association meetings are small in attendance. I would suppose that most members – having achieved the election of an NDP government are waiting for the results.

The coming BC convention should prove valuable to assess the next period in this respect. The demand for a women`s ministry – which I take for granted is an anti-bureaucratic demand – that the members in parliament carry the will of convention delegates – should provide some fireworks.

I personally am not too sure about the new labor legislation. It meets a key demand that such matters be taken out of the courts – the most apparent form of the bourgeois character of the state apparatus. I was hoping to come across CUPE`s evaluation. Stan Little made a generally favourable evaluation. The press here has treated it sketchily. The attack of some of the labor leadership that it opens the door to breaking the closed shop because of its Rand Formula with regards to persons objecting to the check-off on religious grounds doesn`t appear to me to be particularly substantial. I am a little leery about some of the protests I have so far heard – after all the Liberal and other bourgeois influences are not negligible in BC union top circles.

Of course knowing the brass of the NDP I am sure there is lots wrong with this legislation and their other sins of omission & commission – but as revolutionary socialists we have to have good grounds – and not just automatically carry our knowledge of reformism – onto everything the Barretts do. From the press here Barrett is cutting a radical image.

What is doing with Waffle out there – and the Revolutionary Marxist Group? I hear that Lyle and Terry have surfaced behind the RMG, and (that Alan) Engler – who fought our 1968 document Canada-US Relations into the ground – is now out organizing in Trail. It looks as if Waffle here in Ontario is about to join the Saskatchewan act and we will have what I suppose we would have to call a centrist socialist formation in Canada. Waffle and the RMG are posing big challenges to our movement. What does Waffle amount to in BC? I know that Canadian national unionism is a growing phenomena out there. According to Andre Beckerman all that is needed is a break like Kitimat and it will sweep the West. In my opinion some of the best militants are thinking along these lines – for complete autonomy within the so-called internationals or an independent Canadian trade union centre. We will see what CUPE will do over the CLC`s latest move against them re – civil servants.

Recent Mid-East events must be hitting Zionist circles in Canada hard – it is obvious that there can be no peace for Jews there and a new way must be plotted – a democratic secular state. According to the somewhat surprising interview with a MIR leader in the recent IP the struggle in Chile can open up again. A terrible lesson and defeat. I would like to believe that the essential MIR cadre has not been destroyed and the

lessons learned there on the spot. We had a successful aid meeting here with Chartrand and McDermott – but it is hard to see the committee (due to RMG shenanigans) going forward.

Comradely, Ross Dowson

As of Nov. 7 I will be living at apartment #2311, 40 Homewood, Toronto

(Undated, typed article, found in 1973, in "R.D. Contributions file, Labor Party Tendency")

Ross's Summary on the NDP discussion

I appreciate very much the contribution of both Art and Dick — very salutary and I hope they document them. Very valuable their contribution, so the movement can get to grips with this problem.

I should just say a few words about the Labor Party Tendency's so-called boycott of the convention. I didn't think it was a mystery to any comrade why I wasn't at the convention. I had mimeograph ink all over me; I put out the document for this plenum. I thought it was necessary for this plenum. And I did the mimeographing; other comrades were working, etc. and I just happened to have a lot of time. Other comrades came and typed it. It's a big job and it took me longer to do it than I thought. I went to the first session. There was no boycott of that at all. Although I will say I consider the debate on the labor party question a key question, a very key one. Furthermore I would say that we did not, in reality, have a convention, comrades, because I am a member of the Lenin-Trotsky faction and I didn't wish to involve myself in a debate in which I had some differences within the faction.

John made use of his speech in quite a shocking way I thought. In his introductory comment he went to a great length to attack the Labor Party Tendency, which quite astonished me in knowing it was part of the Lenin-Trotsky Faction. However, 1 decided not to be provoked. I think this was correct.

What about a few other things. For instance, I was rather amused when John said that all I had to do was make a motion in the Political Committee to make sure the document on Canadian Unionism and the document on the Women's Ministry would go forward. Comrades, I raised that time and time again in our Politica1 Committee, so now I understand I made some precedent in our Political Committee and because I didn't call a vote and make a showdown in the Political Committee, it's **my** responsibility.

As a matter of fact, comrades, the Labor party Tendency, its comrades involved in it, have tried to **cool** the situation. The tendency itself was in party built by the Political Committee. Ask Pat Mitchell. She thinks she was forced into the tendency. I told the comrades in the Political Committee that some comrades were getting together to discuss the problem of the press, the unease about it, and I was told very quickly those meetings can't take place very long, you've got to organize a tendency or break!

Well, comrades made the decision to organize a tendency. I don't think there is anything bad about a tendency. It's how the tendency conducts itself and it's how the leadership conducts itself. The tendency considered we would go through a discussion and try and present some useful documents to the movement. I think the tendency was necessary. I could have met aside, and not told anybody, with some comrades with whom

I thought I had some substantial agreement with, but as a responsible person, I told the P.C.

Well, there are a lot of other little things thrown in, but we've got a discussion on our hands now, and I think the tendency isn't a bad thing at all. As a matter of fact, I think the tendency is very necessary, particularly in the light of Comrade Art's contribution, and Comrade Dick's.

Okay. Well, I could start with page 6 in the document *(leaves podium, continues to speak – something about the page, the paragraph or the quote…)*

Ross: …my report and the contribution. By Trotsky! That's what makes me so uneasy about the comrades suddenly having it revealed to them that the NDP is, is permissibly, to be called a social democratic party. We talked about that in the document, I guess it's the 1952 document, eh? "The CCF, Our Tasks and Perspectives," 195l. We talked about what the CCF is. It is no longer permissible for comrades to attempt to estimate the CCF and let ourselves and the party — we called ourselves the RWP at the time — be guided by ready-made formulas, such as social-democratic, reformist, political support of the bourgeoisie, third party of the bourgeoisie. We didn't deny this, the merit of those terms. Then we went on to say there was a lengthy quotation by Trotsky to our French comrades as to whether these definitions were correct when applied to the French Socialist Party in 1934. Trotsky answered, both yes and both no. Pretty wishy-washy. Didn't stand up and be counted. He said, "Rather no than yes! The impossibility of applying henceforth the simple customary definition is of itself the unmistakable expression of the fact that (what we have to deal here with) is a centrist party." He talked about this party (as) no 1onger what we thought it was, it's a centrist party. "Which as a consequence of the rapid evolution of the country, still retains its two poles as sharpest contradictions. One would have to be a hopeless scholastic in order to be prevented by the label 'Second International' – " that's what Brett Smiley threw on it, you see, "— from seeing what is actually taking place. **Only a dialectical definition** of the Socialist Party, above all, a concrete appraisal of its internal dynamics, can give the Bolshevik-Leninists the possibility of drawing up a correct **perspective" —**Trotsky used the word **perspective,** — "and of adopting an active and not a **waiting** policy." An active policy! Well, comrades, our policy is an active policy with relation to the NDP. So. Joyce's — I thought Joyce's report contained a few interesting comments, and I'd like to comment. 1'm going to try to deal with some of the comments that comrades made. Joyce made some comments about how the NDP — I'm hesitant because there is always a possibility of mis-interpretation. Many of my comments have been **grossly** misinterpreted! But I think she said that the NDP was supporting our program; our program generally had been embedded into the NDP. I gather; I'm hesitant. I would say there is some truth in this, that on many of the immediate demands of great concern and mobilizing the masses in struggle, the NDP takes a correct position, and probably in B.C. more than anywhere else. They went on the Vietnam struggle, you know, comrades. I heard a speech by David Lewis that I wouldn't think any at us would disagree with one iota in Ottawa. Called America imperialists; gave the whole analysis. You can say we pushed them and all that, you know. They went! They went. On a whole series of things, the NDP brass (went).

The picture that Joyce gave to us, without going into the details of what she said, makes me think, comrades, that we should carry out an entry in B.C.! That's what it would make me think. I'm not advocating that, comrades, it's just what Joyce said. The picture she gave of what's happening there, the thinking that is even taking place among some of the parliamentary figures about the nature of the state show the tremendous ferment and unease, and big possibilities for us! And you have to raise the question, is there any value in retaining the independent, open politica1 formation of the Trotskyists? Maybe we should consider making an entry. Now, of course that would be very complex because we wouldn't consider that probably in Ontario, but you see, you have to talk about the real situation and what we should do, and the picture you gave me said, you know, it's a social democratic party? Well, comrades, the picture she gave me didn't convince me it's a very useful – it's very useful to call it a social democratic party. Not very useful. I don't deny it is. You know, I don't know what all this is about, these comrades here talking about some revelation, that I now admit it is a social democratic party, because we never said it was other than a social democratic party. But we said it was not too useful, maybe yes, maybe no, possibly less no rather than more yes! It's one thing to define it formally in (terms of) broad categories. It's another thing to know how to take an approach to it, the perspective your movement has for it. You know, we talk about our movement being a party. I notice this is said more and more in our circle. We talk about ourselves as a party.. We're not a **party,** comrades. We have the program of a party, but we're not a party! Look at us! Look at us! A party? Do you know what parties are, comrades? They have roots in the masses! I heard John talk about the challenge before us. He was talking about the challenges of a party, you know –

Ernie: That's accurate, right now.

Ross: Yeah. We're the League for Socialist Action. Just a little, little grouping of revolutionaries who have a program, which we're convinced is going to — around which a party can be built. And where is it going to be built from? Where are the forces? Comrades, in general, you have to say they tend to be in or move into the NDP, and that's what you mean by an orientation. Where's it at, and where's it going. As a matter of fact, in one of the documents, we talked about how we get a fee1 — I remember it was for me a great source of satisfaction to come to grips about what the CCF was after it became a labor party, and where the struggle was going, and where we were going to come out of! **Our Party!** A party was going to come out of, not an educational league. We're an educational league, that's all we are, and the SWP is not a party in any real meaning of the word either. As a matter of fact, we don't have any parties in the real meaning of the word. We have some possibilities in France and possibilities in Argentina. We call ourselves parties; it's our aspiration, and it means there is no other current that's got our positions. The politics are polarized in a specific nation and *(we possess)* the program that we want to become a party. I understand there is little debate in the PC about whether we are a nucleus or whether we are an embryo, a very tortuous debate, you know. Maybe we are and maybe we aren't, a little more this and a little more that, you see.

Like, there's this other thing you knew about a detour. Well you'll see in the document that I **deny** that the NDP is a detour! I deny it! Your resolution says it's a

detour! I think it's idiotic to call the NDP a detour. It's talking as if the NDP was going the same path! Going to the same objective. It's not a — it's not *(on the same)* road. The objective is the socialist revolution. A detour presumably is just a small diversion; it's going to arrive at the same place. The NDP leadership, the NDP program is not going to bring the working class of Canada to the socialist revolution. It's not a detour, in any meaning of the word. It's a diversion, and the worst type.

However, having said that, I want to talk about — well, there's no time. I've got five minutes — You know you posed a whole series of challenges. Now, I hope you document what you said about the B.C. government being a bourgeois government. I hope you document this. As you start to discuss that, and we start to come to grips with what the implications of that are. I don't know why we would support the NDP if it's a bourgeois government. Why we would identify ourselves *(with it)* in the next election. What are we telling — you see you've got this transition: we support the party, the party is *(a class party –ed.)* – we don't support the leadership, we don't support the program, but when it gets elected, we suddenly don't support it because it's a bourgeois government! I don't think we're going to support a bourgeois government. I'm not! I'm not. If the League took that position, comrades, I would break. If we would support a bourgeois government.

I don't think it's **useful,** comrades, to call an NDP government a bourgeois government. It's **useless** to call it that; it doesn't tell us anything about where the class struggle is, where the radicalization's unfolding, where the possibilities are to build this movement. You know, one of the comrades who got up – I thought Brenda's contribution was very valuable. Orientation. Well, Gord touched on a part. Don't know what it means to call it our attitude – our approach to the NDP *(is)* an orientation. I don't understand how you could describe our attitude, our stance, our perspective with regard to the NDP in any other way than an orientation. We've had this orientation for many years. We've had it since 1948. 1948! The CCF, and then into the NDP. A fundamental, common orientation. We considered that's where the class was in the process of radicalizing, and we would adapt our tactics within what the day-to-day life and experiences were taking place. We have an orientation to the working class, Brenda said. Yes! That means having an orientation to the NDP. It's that simple. In Canada, it's that simple. I think it is very nice that it is so simple. We're very fortunate to be in a country where the radicalization of a class in general, takes place within the NDP. And that is what the Waffle experience told us. The Waffle move into the NDP confirmed completely our view, as against Allen Engler's view. We said the radicalization was going to go in the NDP, because in Canada, it's a class party! And those young radicals can't go anywhere else, as soon as they start to think in terms of politics, which they must of necessity, they'll go into the NDP. And that's where we will be, and where we will meet them. Sometime we will weigh the problem of the Waffle, the very serious experience of the Waffle.

I don't think in the document — just referring to Bev's comments – I don't think it is so bad to say that the NDP is our party in the YS leaflet. Our party. We comment on that. I think comrades should read that part. It's a tactical question. Because there was the youth, we're the only youth organization, socialist youth organization in Canada. There

was no NDP youth organization. I suggested we would have probably suggested to the youth that they take out that word "our", but the document, the thing itself is very good, and I would hope Bev would read the pamphlet again, the leaflet, and I think she will agree, it's very good picture of our orientation.

Well, comrades. I say that the formulation that the NDP in B.C., or anywhere it is a government, that it is a bourgeois government, is not a useful formulation, Comrade Young. Is the NDP a Social-democratic party, or is it not? It is, and it is not. That's my answer, Comrade Riddell. Is the NDP a social democratic party? It is and it is not. It's a labor party!! We changed that, you see in the revision of the Political Resolution. Well, I've got one minute, so I want to sum up.

Comrades, the evidence of this movement degenerating, and I say this advisedly, into a sectarian direction is very clear, in the pages of **Labor Challenge**. It's consistent in all items. This comes from this very fundamentalist approach, very fundamentalist approach in thinking that you've nailed something down. You haven't nailed anything down on the nationalism debate, comrades; that debate is still with us, believe it or not. As a matter of fact, I tried to — instead of writing the history of the movement, I thought we don't have too much history until we can settle a couple of those questions — this summer I did a lot of reading on the national question. I'm going to take this up, very very shortly. We're going to present the next document — the Labor Party Tendency intends to present it — it will be a study of the problem of the labor party, and the experience of Marxism-Leninism with the phenomenon of the labor party. That's what we have on our doorstep comrades, a labor party, and if we don't have an orientation, a profound relation to this party, understand that's where the class is going to go through in its experience, if we're not able to move in and take a profound sounding of that movement, with participation in it, we won't build the revolutionary vanguard party in this country. It's that simple.

(ends)

<u>Additional handwritten notes found in 1973</u> "re: Discussion Bulletin 31" *(on this topic – ed.)*

(1)
In our 1970 document we said:

"Thus the NDP represents both an opening to and a barrier against; stands both in the way and athwart the way…" *(commonly referred to in the movement by the phrase "**In the way** and **on the way**" –ed.)* to the building of the revolutionary vanguard. For the class as a whole over the entire past period the NDP represents a progressive and important step forward in their political development and it will continue to do so for some period."

…then it goes on to our position as the League, *(toward the NDP)* of "unconditional support and intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective."

(2)

(For the) LSA – the NDP is not our party and its strategical problems and difficulties are of no concern to us – we are out to build the revolutionary party. We have to present our views as to what has to be done to solve the problems of the Canadian people. The NDP either proposes to do some of these things or it does not. We are not left-S.D.s *(left-social-democrats –ed.)* but revolutionary socialists. We give our critical support to the NDP – that's all. **Labor Challenge** carries the views and line of the LSA.

Build it or just participate in it: the Left Caucus and its policies as a left wing inside the NDP is not *(does not constitute – ed.)* a revolutionary socialist formation but a formation in which revolutionary socialists present their ideas – their democratic and transitional demands. We give support to the Left Caucus – we should address ourselves to it, tell it what to do, but not take its place.

(end of notes)

(Undated book review, found in 1973, edited in R. Dowson's hand, never published)

"1905" by Leon Trotsky (Random House 1972, 448 pp $15 Cloth 2.95 paper)

Leon Trotsky, to whom the Soviet dictator Stalin once attributed all the practical organization of the 1917 insurrection, only later to direct the resources of the Soviet state to expunging his name from history, is still, some 32 years after his assassination, very much in the public eye.

Playwright Peter Weiss of Marat-Sade fame, has made his life the subject of his latest play – and no less a person than Richard Burton, bearded and with granny glasses, will appear on the screen in a portrayal of the great man in his last days.

Interest is not limited to the West. After having pronounced the total irrelevance and death of the body of ideas and the movement that bear his name, once again the official propaganda mills of Moscow and Leningrad are at work.

This makes the appearance of Trotsky's book bearing the simple title **"1905,"** never before available in English, of much more than incidental interest.

1905 is the year when a series of events shook czarist Russia to its very roots – a prologue, according to Trotsky, of the revolution of October 1917.

Trotsky, then 26 years old, played as prominent a role in those events as in the events of 1917. This work is therefore one of those historic rarities, a report of a crucial event, by an eyewitness who is at the same time a chief participant, related with literary flare and intensity.

But before getting into the drama, Trotsky treats us to some 50 pages of Russia's economic and social history. Its purpose, Trotsky explains is "to show to the reader in their static form those social forces which subsequently will appear before him in their revolutionary dynamic."

Here and in several appendices in which he polemicizes against its adversaries he expounds his famous theory of permanent revolution.

One aspect of this theory was the projection that not only was Russia heading into a revolution but that it would achieve victory under the leadership of the working class with the support of the peasantry. Furthermore it held that this new revolutionary power contrary to all previously held opinions from the right to the left, including even those of his own mentors, would not and could not stop with the destruction of the Czarist oligarchy and the establishment of parliamentary democracy. It would inevitably lead to the working class taking power and the carrying out of a whole series of measures that would destroy capitalism and lay the foundations for the construction of a new social socialist order.

Trotsky is often portrayed as being arrogant and vain. However in this work one is disarmed by his modesty. After escaping from Siberia to Europe he sneaked back into Russia to

become the tribune of the revolution. He was elected president of the St. Petersburg Council of Workers Deputies, which led the revolution for 50 days before it was arrested. Following a sensational trial in which he played a dramatic part, he was sentenced to Siberia for life. Yet Trotsky does not appear in this book – or only in the most indirect way – almost in passing. Of the book itself he says that it "does not claim to be a historical work; it represents the evidence of a witness and a participant, written while the traces of the events are still fresh in his mind."

Perhaps this image of Trotsky insofar as it has any validity at all arises from something else altogether, but which is certainly a very striking aspect of this book – his confidence complete and absolute in what he would call the historic process.

At one point in a chapter that he entitles "Instead of a Preface to the Second Part," he writes: "The whole of history is an enormous machine in the service of our ideals. It works with barbarous slowness, with insensitive cruelty, but it works. We are sure of it. But when its omnivorous mechanism swallows up our life's blood for fuel, we feel like calling out to it with all the strength we still possess: "Faster! Do it faster!"

Can we have real knowledge of the past? Do historical events have any intrinsic meaning? Is there causation in the historical process? Is the future predictable? To these questions, from professors Popper to Acton – from the existentialists to some positivists – the answer is No! From Trotsky as a Marxist and proponent of historical materialism, the answer is a confident a resounding Yes!

In **"1905"** Trotsky attempts to penetrate the chaotic and confusing appearances of the given, in order to uncover the essential structural relations that generate them, and the driving forces that will change them. According to him the main fact or governing the development of civilized society is the class struggle. The principal theoretical task is to explain the organic connections between the past, the present and the future in order to clear the way for the next advance of the class struggle.

Aside from projecting the course of the events of 1905 – according to his analysis – and his assertions are categorical – the special alignment of social forces in Russia held out only two fundamental variants of political development in the event of another revolution. Either the reaction would triumph and reconsolidate its grip, if the revolution was again defeated; or the working class would come to power at the head of the masses, as it came close to doing in 1905.

Trotsky's prescience was not confined to the class dynamics of the revolution but extended to the agencies that were carrying it out. He saw that the soviets which had first sprung up in 1905 as a spontaneous creation of the workers were destined to be the central organ of their struggle against the possessing classes and in laying the framework and foundation of a new state power.

Though it ended in defeat, according to Trotsky, writing this book in 1908-1909, a period of deep reaction and demoralization, the 1905 experience cast considerable light on what was ahead. It disclosed the vulnerability of czarism, the political feebleness of the bourgeoisie, the latent insurgency of the land-hungry peasants combined with their incapacity to take the centre of the political stage, and above all the leading and decisive role of the working class. He

predicted that the roles of the contending forces displayed during 1905 would be re-enacted on a higher level at the climactic phases of the next revolutionary upsurge.

The events that unfolded 12 years later in October 1917 would appear to brilliantly prove that the polar lines of development projected by Trotsky in **"1905"** were the only real choices. All those who challenge the concept of the lawfulness of history have in Trotsky's book "**1905"** something very real and substantial to set their minds to.

--30--

RD ON POPULAR FRONTISM

(in "R.D. Contributions File, 1973)

Of course, the Labor Party Tendency didn't... probably... I don't know that it even discussed this Political Committee statement on Popular Frontism.

I was puzzled by Section 11 in this document. I assume the comrades have it - Volume 2, Number 1 in 1973. The section 11. "It is permissible to give critical ~~support~~ support in certain circumstances to political parties of the working class which have a reformist and ~~class~~ class collaborationist program. I such cases, we do not support their program, etc." So comrades, what we have there is a statement of basic principles which I am not in disagreement. Why did I ~~not~~ abstain? I believe I abstained in that vote. Why did I abstain? First, I do not know what its relevancy was. I didn't know what it meant. In real life, you know! You don't just vote for something. I wanted to vote ~~somehow~~ for something I understood. What does it mean? What does that section mean? Why, I put a note opposite to comrades, when I heard the comrades talk about ~~COPE~~ COPE(?), when I heard them talk about the possibilities of cooptation ~~of~~ of FRAP. I don't think there would be any differences among us in how we should meet this. Probably if you looked ~~through~~ through the correspondence you'll find some pronouncements which I myself on COPE, because there was a debate within the

B.C. branch at various times on that phenomenon. I don't know of any disagreement whatsoever on t' is question. We posed the NDP or the CCF, it must be the NDP, to COPE because here was the class! A class expression of politics, but what does this mean?

I said
Well, it doesn't have anything to do with the Canadian situation, nothing to do with the Canadian situation. I don't know how it is tied into the NDP from the point of view of the real debate that's in our movement, the problems before our movement. And I put a note: We're giving much more than critical support, in any meaning of the term as it is understood in ~~the~~ Marxist -Leninist terminology, to the NDP. We are oriented to the NDP. We have ~~a~~ strategic orientation to the NDP, so I considered that I ~~dea~~ didn't know what this meant. Didn't disagree with the thing itself, but didn't know what it meant. And of course it's being interpreted in our movement in various ways.

As to my position on popular front, the issue as in the debate today. I think this has been one of the most unrewarding debate in our movement, particularly in the branch of which I am a member, the debate on popular front. I don't consider that the Allende regime can be usefully called a popular front. I don't believe so. I don't support popular fronts,

and I don't support the Allende regime, and I don't believe that you can-- we've changed our -- well, I don't know whether we now call it an incipient popular front what was happening in France, or whether we call it a popular front -- I haven't listened to all the nuances. I don't believe that could really be called a popular front, the experience our French comrades conducted themselves in in France. So I think this is an artificial issue, an artifical issue that's been injected into the debate. We always, I think Gary said, oppose popular fronts. I want to know what the issue is. Is it a popular front? I heard the most incredible argument that was presented by one of our comrades from this platform against one of the members of the Labor Party Tendency. This comrade said he thought what the French comrades did was okay, it was acceptable within our basic principles, within our whole concepts as outlined here. Then he said he didn't support the Allende regime, so some comrades said, he's even an unprincipled supporter of popular frontism, in one country he supports popular frontism, and in the other he doesn't support popular frontism.

40 Homewood #2311
Toronto Ont.

Nov. 3/73

Isabel Alonso
Riopar Farm
RR#1, Waubaushene, Ont.

Dear Isabel

It was a pleasure to hear from you and to learn of your interest acquainting us with Socialist Worker.

I have been in Europe several times over the last 5 years and whenever I have been in England always picked up Socialist Worker and the IS`s theoretical journal – International Socialism. Yes it contains much valuable material and Labor Challenge already has an exchange. Ted Grant also publishes a worthwhile paper called The Militant. Do you know him from earlier days? The big challenge in Britain is to clarify and overcome the differences among the various groups that call themselves Trotskyist – there are 4 major groups including the International Marxist Group.

I was delayed in getting your letter – and you will pardon my not using a typewriter – everyone here is trying to sleep.

I have already put out ads to see if I can pick up the books that you loaned me and which I have misplaced. Lets hope the finding service comes through. It will take at least a month.

I see Lou Donnelly fairly regularly and have had several long talks with Art Gray while he was recovering from a heart attack he suffered while in Toronto. I gather they managed to keep in contact with you. Incidentally our US co-thinkers have recently put out a splendid edition of Leon Trotsky`s ‘’Where is Britain Going.’’ It not only contains the basic original polemic that you are acquainted with – which in my opinion remains the best writing against reformism – but it contains as much material again that I never saw before. Crescent Publications at 25 Bulwer St. Toronto handles it. I would be pleased to loan you my copy however I am using it right now in a polemic on the Canadian Labor Party – the NDP. It comes in paper at a reasonable price.

A beautiful Fall this year. I imagine that it has been pleasant up your way and you are now prepared for winter.

No sun – no moon
No morn – no noon
No dawn – no dusk, no proper time of day
No warmth, no cheerfulness, no beautiful ease,

No comfortable feel in any member –
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds –
November

Thomas Hood

Salud,
Ross Dowson

Submitted PC

Nov 11/73

The controversy arpund the Mideast war offers important openings for us in our work to build the defense of the Pa;astinian and Arab national struggle, and to win new forces to the Trotskyist program fof the revolution in the Arab East.

Our first priority is our propaganda on these themes, particularly through our press. We concentrate our efforts to achieve the best possible coverage of the issues in the Mideast war in articles in our press, and to circulate it as effectively as possible, particularly in the Jewish and Arab communities.

We lay a particular emphasis on building our con tacts in the Arab communities, and winning Arab revolutionaries to the Fourth International. Such work helps lay the foundation for the emergence of strong Trotskyist parties in the countries of the Arab East.

We work in the Arab and Jewish communities as open partisans of the Arab national cause. We aim to build broad defense for the right of self-determination of the Palastinian and Arab peoples. In the long run, our aim is to build committees similar to the Vietnam Mobilization Committee, in their breadth, and in their clear defense of the Palestinian right to self-determination. In general, we favor and participate in teach-ins and educational activities on the Middle East where the point of view of the Arab national movement, and the point of view of Trotskyists can get a hearing.

We do not aim to set up committees, or organizational structures, which suggest a non-partisan or independent position in the Palestinian struggle against Zionism. We do not aim to form committees of those who "oppose the policies of the governments of both sides, committees of Left Zionists and left Arabs, committees which oppose Zionism and Arab reaction, committees based on defense of the national struggles of the Palestinians and the Jews, or committees for dialogue between Jews and Arabs. Our work is based on the defense of the national rights of the Palestinians, and we favor committees on the Mideast crisis which take a clear stand in defense of the rights of the Palestinians.

1 Royal Pntl
2 Mideast to Europe

Washington worked around the **clock** to bring into force the ceasefire which did not challenge the existence of Israel. Both Washington and Moscow are committ d to such a "settlement." Vietnam, Laos, Chile, and now the Mideast show that the USSR continues to betray the revolutionary struggle, giving openings to US imperialism which it is quick to explcit.

There is no certainty today that the "settlement" will last long. The Israeli state constitutes a permanent souce of cadres, which are likely to erupt again in the near future.

November 12, 1973
40 Homewood, Apt 2311
Toronto

Iriqois Falls — Dawson (older brothers)

Dear Murreny and Jeanette

I have been delayed in writing because among other things you will note from the above address I have moved. Lois did me the very big favor of putting up the money to buy in on the condominium here--the only one in Toronto that has bachelor suites. We got it for $15,750---a 10,000 mortgage the rest Lois"cash. It is one large room with a fine kitchen bathroom and closet area. The view is without parallel or beyond description. . Homewoood is the next block over from Jarvis and No.40 is just above Carloton. I have as I write a completely unobstructed view of the entire douwntown area from Bloor to the lakefront, looking West out to Long Branch. Yesterday as I was cleaning the iwdows a storm came up from the East. An incredible expansion is taking place in Toronto right before my eyes . Do you know the French poest Prevert. He wrote a fine poem along the line-- Our Father who art in Heaven
Stay there---and we will stay here on Earth including
for nothing is more wondercus than more mysterious the
the Trinity than the neon lights of the city etc etc.

Jerry helped me move on Wednesday night . We got the braodloom, refrigerator and stove for the price. Havent had a chance to check out the swimming pool etc etc. There is a very active residents organization--with Dave Middleton--an NDPer who I worked very closely with on the big Fair Play for Cuba Student tour. Jim Mitchell has an apartment one floor down. A town in itself--there must be about 400 units

Naturally I have not been able to do much serious work on any of my projects being so unsettled for almost two months. I am now anxious to build some book vases and get everything soreted out--and of course look for a job.

I just quit after a little more than three weeks running what is called a bookstore for A and A Books on the Yonge Street strip. After one week I knew that it was an impossible situation for me but I kept it as I needed the money. When I took it I knew what I was going to get --$165.00 a week---40 hours--But I neglected to ask what the rest of the staff were getting--- minimum wage at 48 hours. I also learned that the bookstore was a completely separate unit and I would be responsible for hiring and firing. An impossible situation. Naturally enough at those wages they actually had no staff--nobody stayed. The day I took over the shipper left--three days later the order clerk gave notice he was leaving next Saturday. The assitant manager was as the manager who I was replacing was heading out. I hired 10 days and the other I learned gave notice of them who complained about a union and

I hope that Jeanette's X-Ray showed that there was nothing serious. It is good to hear that you are going to give up smoking for a bad cough and whatever brochial trouble the smoking is causing, is probably one of its least bad effects. Everyone here seems to be fine. Jerry was looking after himself while he was moving my books etc. Hugh seems to have things under control--he is taking time off to attend the OFL convention so he can have some discussions with the local leadership about the very complex sitation at Douglas.

Yes, it sounds like not a bad idea to go up to Iriqois Falls for Christmas. I have never been in the north in winter--there is only one problem--a special convention and plenum is being organized in the holidays and I am involved very heavily. I will have to let you know as we get a little closer to the date.

sincerely

Ross

40 Homewood Ave # 2311
Toronto M4Y 2K2
961-4554
November 20,1973

Joseph Starobin
155 Balliol Street # 1002
Toronto 481-4843

Dear Starobin

I am terribly sorry that I have not been able to follow up on our first attempts to get together.

Word of your initiative came to me very late via Vanguad Books and at a time when I was having considerable difficulties. I took a job which paid me very well and imposed not too bad hours on me, however I found that I would have responsibility for hiring and firing --an impossible situation for me--and particularly when it came to workers getting only little more than the minimum wage and working 48 hours. I max toyed with the idea of halding onto it until I could qualify for unemployment insurance but it soon became intolerable. I was also unsettled as to living quarters.

As you can see I have now managed to get a fixed address and I am now getting settled in with my books and papers etc.

In the meantime I have got involved in some heavy discussions and will be quite occupied with them until the first week in January.

I am looking forward to our coming together at your convenience sometime around then.

I am enclosing a little brochure containing a xxxxxx article of general interest

fraternally

Ross Dowson

GS #71
1962-68

Statement by R. Dowson on summary of Paquette's report on his views on the draft political resolution submitted by the IEC Majority Tendency for the coming World Congress

I abstained in the political committee vote on this summary. I would note that Paquette's contribution is his own and now that of the PC majority--but not that of the Lenin-Trotsky Faction.

Paquette's report zeros in on what he defines as three central errors in the political resolution--"its analysis of the detent, of popular frontism, and its line on the "new mass vanguard.'".

While I agree that there are many things wrong with the draft, after reading it, hearing comrade Paquette's supplemantary comments and the criticisms of other pc members I do not think Paquette case as outlined in this summary. is made.

1 - I do not see any substantial difference between the evaluation we made of the detente in our political resolution and that expressed in the draft political resolution before us. I do not see how it can be said that the on-going revolutionary process as noted in the resolution is based on some kind of "rigid schema " .....leadt of all one "which admits no twists, turns or downturns." Paquette's critcism poses as many problems as its solves--what does it mean, when it says that the resolution doesn't "recognize a deep change in the world situation."? Has the rise in the radicalization been blocked ? ? ?

2 - How can it be said that the draft resolution puts" the fourth International on record as faovring Popular Fronts in key countries." ? How can it be said that the IEC majority tendency document draws "diametrically differental conclusions from the Chilean tragedy" than we do ; that the resolution, instead of pointing out that "the chief lesson is that a mass revolutionary party was was needed" concludes that "the weakness of reformism is the main leasson "? What is this section trying to prove ---that the authors of the resolution Paquette do not understand the historic role of reformism ? What does the document mean when he writes"As if reformism was not strong enough in chile to success-

fully carry out its historic function of betraying the socialist revolution."
Yes, the implications of this paragraph are truly satonishing.

3 I too agree with what I recall to be the chief criticism Mary-Alice Waters made of the European document and her comments on the so-called concerns of the vanguard and the concerns of the working class which has to make the revolution. But can it be denied that there is a new mass vanguard as described in the political resolution draft and what has such an observation to do with a breakthrough theory that repleces that of guerrilla warfare, as in their Paquette's notes claim? I do not see how it can be claimed that the draft resolution the IEC majority only "tip their hat to the concept that we must fight programmatically to win over this vanguard" to our program and to our movement ? and that it is clear that the resolution is not talking about a transitional strategy.

I am aware of our experiences with some of t e leaders of the IEC Majority Tendency and resolutions that they have prepeared and have been passed at congress with our support, with being informed subsequently that they contained concepts that were substantially different than what we had thought and what the congress had discussed when approving them, with phrases and formulations that lend themselves later to different interpretations .
In the past we have challenged such interpretations and have refused to recognize them. We have fought out the specific and concrete issues when the hidden concepts were revealed and used to claim that the question at issue had already been settled and with our vote. We stood by our understanding of what we voted for

However we are confronted with a specific resolution and with the need to deal in debate with what it actually does say. I assume we still hope to influence other comrades across the globe who are studying this document. We will not influence anyone in the world movement and only miseduc te our own forces if we carry the line of Paquette's criticism. It is a form of factionalism that does not serve the interests of the Lenin-Trotsky faction because it is irrational.

"Decenta 4, 1973"

December 4, 1973
40 Homewood Ave, $2311
Toronto m4Y 2k2

Germany
Dear Hans;

Of course I have been intending to write you for somewhile. Mailyne gave me your address a while back. And here I am with one of my plans frustrated and with a little time-so to the typewriter.

I dont seem Marilyne very often and missed her at the tendency meeting last night . I gather she was tired out after the NDP women's weekend conference which Roz and Lynda D say was a colloscl and tiring event. And I do not see Regula very often, other than the branch meetings and she missed the tendency meeting because I amazed to learn that Jim did not have her new phone number--ah well. Regual was a delegate to the ONL convention and I gather managed to play a good role. From the press you would think that te the Trotskyists were a real operation--in fact the G and M balance sheet talked of the impact of the dissident lefts. The Star's balance sheet commenced with a whole section on Hugh and his presentation and defence of his loed's motion to urge unions with international affiliation to demand that their leadership withdraw from the wage freeze govt boards as they effect Cdn workers wages---and to emulate the Cdn union leadership that has no truck or trade with such bodies and has condemend them in principle. Terry Meagher took him on with the argument how can we demand that the US union brass and US unions keep out of our affairs we we try to interfere in their affairs. The resolution had you might say a reverse Canadian trade union autonomy line .

and what do M and R tell you these days. It seems obvious to me that the situation inith the movement is even one of a more rapid deterioration. Of course I see it on the top--as Reguala added to see it also. Right now the bureau is coming to the pc meetings with a series of position papers. Art gave a crtique of the draft resolution that the Germain outfit submitted for the WC. The crtique is factional in the worst menaing of the word--blid and irrational. Of itself ti would suggest that they are not interested in convincing anyone but are heading for split--but this is our burea's contribution and not a the LT factions so I do not know from this crtique tries to carry the 1st line that Germain is moving to support popular fronts which they see arising everywhere with the detente and the raprochment of the SP-CP's. As you probably know they characterize the French support of the Union of the Left as support of PF and the allende government as PF. I have submitted a short statement dissociating myself from this crtique. Of course this involves the LT faction--I find it diffult to believe that they are moving this way on their own. They have a special statement on popular fronts for our own convention and last meeting saw them submit a statement on Waffle. I was not there and havent seen it but even GA I hear questioned its use--however I gather John is anxious to know my reaction . My impression is that we are still trying to make the NDP our point of differentiation from Waffle. Not stay in and fight this time but from a point of view of orientation now that the Sask Waffle has set off on an independent course and Ontario is having a big discussion in a conference this weekend. There is nothin in this for us it seems to me--we should be discussing the problems of building a revolutionary organization-world outlook, Stalinism, social democracy, the state. It is hard to believe that any new formation that came out of the Waffle would be able to take a sectarian position on the NDP. even though it first has to define itself in relation to it. We are trying to make out that Sask is

going electoralist but their Newxt Year Country editorial reads;"The electoral tactic, if its limitations are kept clearly in mind,can be a useful way of drawing together the diverse energies of socialists around the province. It can provide the organization and programmatic basis for the extra-parliamentary activity which must be the lifeblood of any serious socialist movement." Abbie, John Glenn and several other comrades will be attending the Waffle Ont conference this weekend where the problem of launching an independent operation will be discussed , moving towards resolution but not actually settled. Glenn is a delegate from Brantford Waffle. He went around to a membership meeting of about 12 and they asked him to be a delegate--NDP membership no problem. John. G phoned Gary to ask about some preliminary meeting to discuss our li line but Gary told him they had not worked out anything--very difficult in the face of our line on Canadian nationalism

The energy crisis xxxxxand the role of the US owned oil corporation i Canada and the obvious need to nationalize them has brought Waffle, Canadian nationalism and the NDP to the fore again. It has given the NDP brass the type of election issue it has been looking for xxxxxx the Tories have lined up with the oil monopolists and so Trudeau in order not to be brought down has made sweeping concessions to the NDP. No doubt you will be reading over there the wisecrack Trudeau made when the oil moguls started to whine and the press stopped at him--one reporter told him that he had gone beyond in concessions what the NDP even asked for--he said "we have gone beyond the Communist Manifesto." He hasn't not urally gone very far but he had to block the Alta Tory SC decision to blackmail the East with a two price system which xxxxxxxxx would hit all oil burners including Eastern industry's and of course to respond to the powerful national sentiment that the US oil bosses have roused. I hear LC's latest are ticle which had to respond has been attacked by Beiner of Montreal for capitulating to reactionary bourgeois nationalist sentiments.

We are almost finished our document on the leaderships dropping our NDP orientation. I found your HK contribution useful. We have the young Riddell reply to Germain which adds substantially to the LC record. They defend"our orientation from Germain's attack by presenting it as some com on ordinary everyday problem of faction work and not at all with a non-split perspective....that is by actuallu dropping it. It is not clear as to how they are going to try to handle this at the plenum. And for that matter it is not clear how they are going to handle our women's work which got into difficulty with the Morgenthaler campaign. After having decided that abortion wasn't the central issue--we made the switch but couldn't bring the comrades in C.O along with us very easily finally having to instruct them to dump their classes and take away the staff person and put her into the Morgenthaler office. Had to also shamefacedly admit that our attempt to limit the slogans to drop the charges and exclude repeal the law was asinine as everyone, yes everyone pulled them together to over come our dichotomy.

A lot of concern in the tendency as to where we are going. But it seems to me that there is no crisis demanding the answer. The world congress will be taking place in mid-Jan. According to Peter H who dropped in for old lang sayne the RMG is going to be given sympathizing status. Is that acceptable to the LSA operators.Hard to see it. Something is going to be given the RMG and whatever it is is going to further nish the LSA operation towards sectarianism--that is even if it doesn't lead to sol and they decide they have to live with it. After the WC we will have the r need to assess the situation as that may well bring considerable changes.

The other night in a Darrell F--Terry B debate on the Mandel political resolution(yes Mandel has two supporters Terry B and BarryG) Darrell let fall that the German leaders have had a fall-out with Mandel. Are you in touch at all.

Looking forward to spending a little time with you from your busy social whirl when you come over for Christmas

all the best

Ross D

Ref. ltr. DS 1973-74 #89

December 4, 1973
40 Howewood Ave #2311
Toronto M4Y 2k2

Dear Cynthis and Maurice;

Just a note that I have been held up from sending off by the pressure of a whole series of political developments and the slowness of the CO to get dt out my contribution on the Women's Ministry

Well my contribution is out. Jacquie and John must both have copies. I d do not know how the leadership is going to handle it--there have been two pc meetings since and it has not been dealt with. I raised the matter at the last last meeting --referred itshandling to the burea so we would at least get a report. My contribtion on Canadian unionis m came out almost two months ago and has not been dealt with. I do not know that Jacquie will show it to you ,Isolde or anyone else. So I will somehow get another copy and sent it to you for your so le personal information. When I referred it to the burea I seem to recall that Phil expressed the view that it dealt largely with journalism, style, or something like that. Their most aggressive man on the PC, now that Dick is away ~~xxxxxx~~ Dennis L ~~xxxx~~ claimed that this difference unliek other critcisms I have made of the paper involves principle. and of course that is what is behind thei r cryptic paragraph n on the state. They think the ministry concept is based on illusions about the state but they havent got the guts to really present that argument fortrightly. Hence you will understand my attempt to force them to really explain what is behind <u>their</u> change of view(not 2 NDPers views) and what principles are inv. lved and how. Hard to say how they wi l handle it.

I thought Walters contribution to Body Politic on the post office experi nce was quite valueable. Incidnelty that little rendez-vous you heard about camedf. But it must have been a disappointment to them. My impression is that thatwl whole circle of ex-LSAers, all very talent , is undergoing a rapid process of degenration. I hate to think so but they are not very political and seem quite ~~xxxx~~ wrapped up not so much in gay liberation as a social question and its relation to the socialist revolution but in their own personal problems. I hope that I am wrong . And i I am not wrong I hope that it is just a phase. Of course I did not fill them in with all the latest on the LSA--what for. I tried to talk to them about themselves as revolutionists

A bundle of Priorieties came in-November issue. I see there was nothing that appeared related to our little co ntribion--unless that abstract middle ~~xxxx~~ paragraph on page 9 of Kandle's article

There are some difficulties in the womens work here that have been bad badlyhandles and t us have led to some ill feelings. As you know the convention ad and the plenum before it dumped abortion as the central issue. With the Mrgen thale r case ; totally unexpected I gather we made a switcheroo and made abortion agai n the ma n issue. This upset Mary True no end. Now it seems that we were not able to make the switch with the the coalition operation here--they contin ed business as usual. So the leadership moved in and even put Cushman on staff of the Mrgentaler defen ce. Then we not very clearly were forced to admit that the line we had been carrying in the Morgen thaler fight was incorrect. Perhaps you will recall Liz's article in LC exp laining the one and only one slogan--drop the charges and how repeal the laws was dead wrong as it would limit the appeal. I never did grasp that separation and apparnelt life itself di d not Everyone for drop the charges turned out to be for repeal---how el se. So we have now committed outselves to repeal. Unfortunately these comrades most directly inv olved never want to come out with it--reports are muddled, unintelligible--so Pat M and Jessie M took them on --but comrades seem to care less and less.

How is Joynce these days----and of course your baby.

Havent got to reading the material arounid the CO on the BC convent ion and of course problems to get it to and to know not your opinion of the Canadian question in the most veiled form.

comradely Ross

(undated, found in 1973-D3 #99)

Theory of Nationalism and Canada

1) 20th Century Nationalism, Barclay, Glen St. John D443 B343, 1972 Wayne
2) The Bolsheviks and the national and colonial question 1917-28, Boersner,D JV 151 B6 Zane
3) Canadian Institute of Int. Affairs, Power and Independence JC 311 C3
4) Nationalism and its alternatives, Deutsch, Karl Wolfgang JC 311 D42 Wayne
5) Nationalism and Ideology, Barbara Jackson(Ward) HM 104 J3 Wayne
6) The national liberation movement in the East, Lenin, DK 254 L3 0213
7) Questions of national policy and proletarian internationalism, Lenin, JC 311 L75, Zane
8) Lenin on the question of nationality, Low, Alfred D., JC 311 L75 Zane
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1) Is there a general theory of nationalism?
   (i) nationaliàm as a consciousness as well as an ideology
      -T. Thomas notes III
      -Germain pg. 26,27,28 notes IV
      -Gery Porter "Memorandum on the use of the term nationalism" bulletin
      - Horowitz pg. 8, 35
   (ii) catalyst and/or trigger concept or envelope
      - Germain pg. 26
   (iii) analysis as concrete
      -Horowitz pg. 7
      -T. Thomas pg. 2
   (iv) patriotism/chauvinism vs. nationalism
      -Howowitz pg. notes III
   (v) nationalism as empty vessel concept
      -Horowitz pg. 16
   (vi) nationalism as unitary with different aspects to it
      - Horowitz pg. 12
   (vii) two nationalisms idea
      -Germain pg. 28, 30, 35
2) role of nationalism as an ideology in a progressive national struggle
   -Horowitz pg. notes IV
   -Germain pg 23 pt. 1

3) the relationship between the subjective and the objective
   i.e. when does the subjective become the objective

4) false consciousness
   (i) -Horowitz pg. 6 col.2
      -T. Thomas pg. 3
   (ii) "imperialist economism"
      -Thomas pg. 2

5) permanent revolution as applied to advanced countries
   -Horowitz pg. 7 col2
   -Thomas pg.2

6)nationalism and anti-imperialism
   -Germain pg.25

7) independence and Marxism
   -Germain pg.32-33

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~~- from Br Colonial Study in power~~

from a Br Colony to an independent to Equitable Imperial Partnership

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